



#### **Peak Collective**

E.war Bryan Hill Amber Holland Peggy Karamazov

#### **Contributors**

The Friendly Organ Zel Devin K Fuerza/Puwersa Guelph ABC James Novak Joshua Coby Anonymous Abby Aiden Globe e.war Ciddia Silvara Bailey trolle byron. mandy hiscocks Tammy Lee Amanda Burns Mina Vonnomechingues

#### **Get in Touch:**

peakatguelph@gmail.com

#### **Volunteer:**

volunteer.peak@gmail.com

#### **Web Support:**

peak.web.coordinator @gmail.com

#### **Submisions:**

peakcontent @gmail.com

#### Office:

thepeakoffice@gmail.com

#### The Peak

Volume 52, Issue 4 April 2013

#### **Mailing Address:**

The Peak Magazine University Centre Room 258 University of Guelph Guelph, Ont. N1G 2W1



## table of contents

#### **INTRODUCTIONS**

Introducing Tar Sands Oil to Southern Ontario Letters to the Editor	2	The Peak Collective
	4	Various
RESISTING LINE 9		
Tar Sands Pipelines as Bottle-Necks	6	Anonymous
Points of Intervention Against the Reversal	12 16	Anonymous Anonymous

#### **NEWS FROM THE FRONT LINES**

Aamjiwnaang/Sarnia

Line 9 Gathering

at Hamilton High School Responses to Gentrification News Briefs: Spring Issue Report Back from Simcoe: Response to El Cuts for Migrant Workers Police are the Army of the Rich: International Day Against Police Brutality There is No Justice at Grand Valley	20	Devin K	
	22 24 26	A Social Rebel Peggy K Mina Vonnomechingues	
	28	Bryan Hill	
	30	Tammy Lee	
	<b>32</b>	Bryan Hill (Guelph ABC)	
Apre a Culture			

#### **ARTS & CULTURE**

The Memory of Soil: Wonderings	<b>34</b>	James Nowak
from the Guelph Tracking Club Broken Thunder: The Story of the Passenger Pigeon	36	James Nowak

#### ANALYSIS

Is Gender the Lynchpin to Ending Mountaintop	40	Joshua Coby
Removal Coal Mining?		

#### REVIEWS

46 47 48	Bryan Hill Aiden Globe Joshua Coby
	47

#### Introducing...

### TAR SANDS OIL INTO SOUTHERN ONTARIO

N THIS ISSUE OF THE PEAK, WE BRING TOGETHER A COLLECTION of articles focusing on Enbridge's Line 9 Pipeline Reversal. As Tar Sands oil expands into the east, its development intersects with environmental injustice, resistance, Indigenous sovereignty and economic plundering. While this pipeline is an environmental catastrophe waiting to happen, it is not the only factor at play. It must be viewed within the dynamics of power, capitalism and colonization within the Canadian state.

Line 9 is an illogical project put forth by the oil rich company called Enbridge. This pipeline reversal would seek to change, for the third time, the directional flow of oil from Sarnia to Westover and onward to Montrèal ports. This west to east reversal would solidify a network that would allow for Tar Sands bitumen to reach the Atlantic coast. If this is successful, it will allow for the expansion of the largest, most destructive industrial construction project on Earth.

This cannot happen.

Line 9 was constructed in 1976, it was never built to handle the type of heavy crude extracted in Alberta. Thus, it is not a matter of if it will break, but a matter of when it will happen. We all need clean water, we need the natural world and this pipeline is going to cross the Grand River, pass through major urban areas and encroach upon many Indigenous reserves without negotiation and without consent.

From the West Coast down to Texas, people are rising up and resisting the implementation of pipelines.

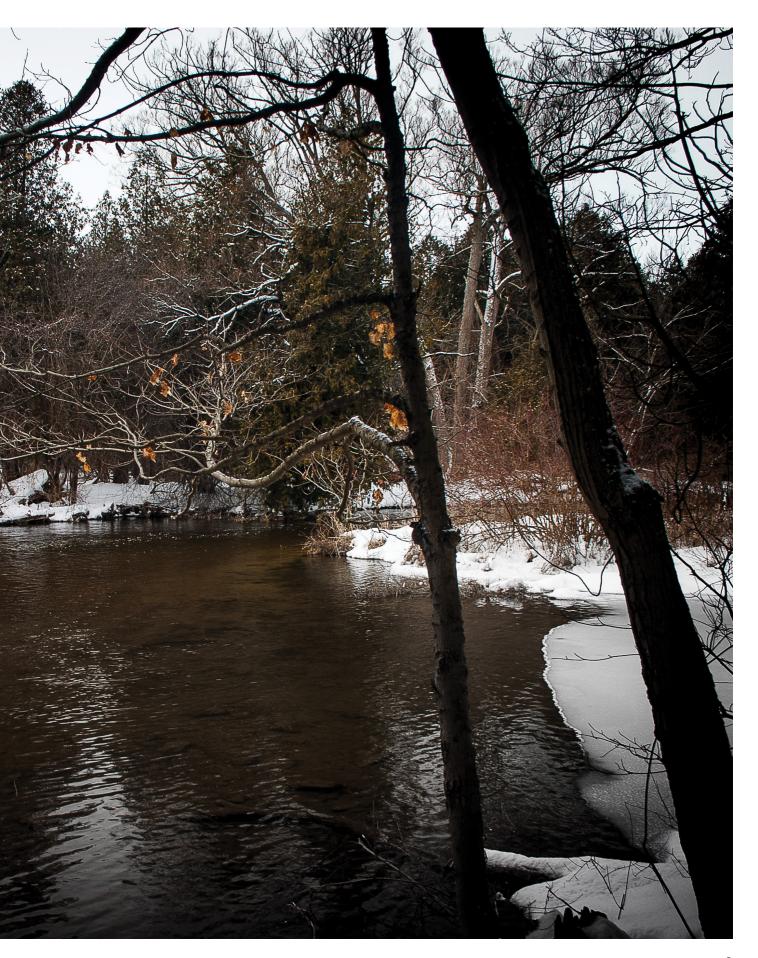
Ask yourself what do you stand for, at what point do you draw the line, and why?

In this issue you'll find specific information about the Line 9 reversal: how it will be done, the pipeline's route, how it relates to other pipeline projects, who stands to benefit, as well as an analysis of the project and the opposition to it in terms of political and economic power relations. The potential for severe social and environmental consequences is discussed, as well as the potential for severely awesome resistance. Local organizing in Hamilton, an action group in Guelph, and a new province-wide network are some of the many different ways to get involved - and you can read about them all here.

This is one we can win. Now's the time!

Sincerely,
The Peak Collective





# Letters to

feedback on our website from our readers, one of the most animated discussions came from Karen Forbirch's piece on graffiti in Guelph. The discussions that followed are available online in their entirety, but we have reprinted below a few comments, edited for brevities sake. Keep sending us your thoughts and keep them under 250 words.

## RE: SCRIBBLING ON GUELPH'S WALLS

Hi, I live in the Ward in Guelph and have walked/driven past the "sign" featured in this article several times. I'm just wondering how turning a derelict building into a set of apartments constitute "objects and signs that represent social control and surveillance"? As far as I know, the people who live in that building are regular folks who have regular jobs just like in every other apartment or condo in the city. If it's a money thing, there are tons of houses (bungalows, even) for sale right now just a few blocks away for 400-700k...why not tag those places too? I personally would hate it if someone decided to go around spray painting "f\*\*k your houses" on the side of my home. How is this any different?

-Paul Feb. 19th, 2013

### RE: SCRIBBLING ON GUELPH'S WALLS

I am a Ward resident as well, and although I don't think the use of cuss words is necessary, I think there is a real tension that exists that these (likely) young people are drawing attention too....I am not one to judge their youthful delivery and am more interested in what they are trying to say.

I am a renter in this neighbourhood, and the high priced condominium/shopping district they are planning is going to push up rent. I have already just received my first rent increase in 3 years, and my landlord choose to raise it the maximum she is allowed by law.

I choose the ward as a place to live because there is more community here then I have found in the south end, and I have been able to afford my rent. With this development, featuring luxury housing and luxury business store fronts, It is most definitely going to bring in richer people, and I fear my landlord wont think twice in evicting me to get some of this new money and raise the rent after some minor renovations.

What I love about our neighbourhood is that most of us are just working to get by, we got enough to make ends meet (sometimes just barely) but we see each other for the street parties and bbq's. We will also be there for each other to offer help when our cars break down or shoveling each others walkways.

When I walk around our neighbourhood, I feel like it becomes more and more apparent every day that there is an aesthetic and community here that I love which developers and real estate agents have turned into a lifestyle they can sell and make a profit off of.

So Paul, maybe you could lay off these young people, we are never going to stop them from painting on the walls, and they likely wont listen to us. But lets talk about why these young people are doing it in the first place, because there is definitely something happening in the neighbourhood.

-Angela Robinson Feb 20th, 2013

## RE: SCRIBBLING ON GUELPH'S WALLS

...Giving your neighbourhood a black eye is a feeble solution. They honestly have no idea how many citizens of the Ward have contacted the Mill Lofts to offer apologies and a sincere hope that it doesn't reflect on the neighbourhood as a whole in terms of condoning such behaviour.

Those people who claim to be so community minded should perhaps make an effort to get to know their neighbours before making decisions to vandalize their homes. They just might find that retail clerks live there, cleaners, and a sweetheart of a guy who collects shopping carts for a living (who has a learning disability and doesn't understand why someone wrote that on his home). They might meet the fellow who works there who engages members of the neighbourhood who pass by with a pleasant hello and conversation, offering their dogs a biscuit and water on hot days (ask around...he's known for that). Hard working people who are being shit on by members of their own neighbourhood...nice.

Sometimes activism can be ill advised and aimed at the wrong people, which makes the perpetrators simply look foolish. (Go ask Jerry Useless of the Squamish Five if he regrets in of his past activist adventures, you might be surprised by his answer).

Think!

-Dan Feb 21st, 2013

## RE: SCRIBBLING ON GUELPH'S WALLS

I'd like to add my voice to this conversation, as I feel like I can offer a bit of a unique perspective. I am 28 year old ward resident. I live on Alice street and see the Mill Lofts every day. I don't necessarily like all the graffiti on its walls. The 30 foot tag reading "fuck your condos" is too vulgar for a family neighborhood. And the "watch your back remax" threat is quite spineless. But I do have a great deal of sympathy for the sentiments and the political positions in which they are rooted.

I think loft or condo style development is a mistake in urban planning, and is a design trend which needs to be curbed. This isn't a judgment of the people who end up living in condos, but is a critical response to gentrification, public policy such as the Places to Grow Act, and misguided environmentalism that fetishises 'building up.'

# the Editor

The ward is changing, and not for the better. Condo towers umpteen stories tall are not appropriate for this neighborhood. Neither are high end boutiques. Lets get past you painted here and that's mine mine mine, and lets get over dropping fifteen foot f-bombs and move on.

What are we going to do to maintain the unique culture of our neighborhood? How are we going to preserve the community values that have drawn us all to this place? The working class culture, the Italian heritage, the strong sense of autonomy. Preserving these things are the real challenges we face, not a three story apartment building with tall ceilings and exposed ducts, nor a little bit a of public mischief here and there.

-Zach Feb 25th, 2013

### RE: SCRIBBLING ON GUELPH'S WALLS

The fact is, that scribbling your opinions on buildings such as the Mill Lofts, or on the convenience store down the road, or on someone else's property, is that your involving people who don't have a single say in the development of The Ward. Do you think that Fusion Condos representatives dry through the Ward every day and say "Hmmm theres graffiti here, they don't seem to like us very much, maybe we should change locations". No, instead the people that have to look at that brutal graffiti on a daily basis, are the people who live in and love the neighbourhood. (Most who shake their heads in disgust every time they drive past the slander) The residents in the Lofts aren't responsible for the new swing of condos scheduled to go up. So stop making it their problem, forcing them to deal with graffiti removal.

If we all were to go spray painting on every unkempt house and building that we didn't approve of, our neighbourhood would sure be an eye sore.

-Chantel Feb 27th, 2013

## RE: A CRITIQUE OF HILLSIDE

I have been going to hillside for many years, and always enjoyed it but in the last two or three years have noticed a change, I am wondering if that change is just me waking up to the farce of hillside as a community-local event, or if hillside is selling out, thanks for putting this into words, although i dont agree with all of this, and still like going, im so happy someone wrote about it and enjoyed reading it,

-Mallory, Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013 △

## Summer Issue Call-Out

We welcome submissions of previously unpublished writings in line with The Peak's anti-capitalist, anti-oppressive, radical and anarchist focus. This summer our featured articles will focus on the topic of borders. We are soliciting articles about: migrant work(ers), life underground, migrant health, personal stories of borders, information on the CBSA, Recent changes to legislation, Immigration detention. We are also seeking content that fits into our regular columns;

## NEWS FROM THE FRONT LINES

We want your current event stories, from coverage of current grassroots resistance movements to report backs from demos and other events. Short news briefs are welcome.

#### THEORY AND ANALYSIS

Theory is a broad category that encompasses discourse, philosophy and rants. From ramblings of french anarchist theory to critiques of community accountability processes, to opinion pieces and analysis of current and past struggles. Send us your thoughts, ideas or just stuff you've been mulling over.

#### **REVIEWS**

Read a zine you absolutely hated or a book that blew your mind? Have a sex toy that you just cant put down? Write us a review! Reviews can be short and sweet or or in-depth. If you need ideas, we may be able to hook you up with free copies for reviews.

#### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

The deadline for submissions for the summer issue is May 27, 2013.

Submissions should be sent to peakcontent@gmail.com in .odt or .rtf formats, please.

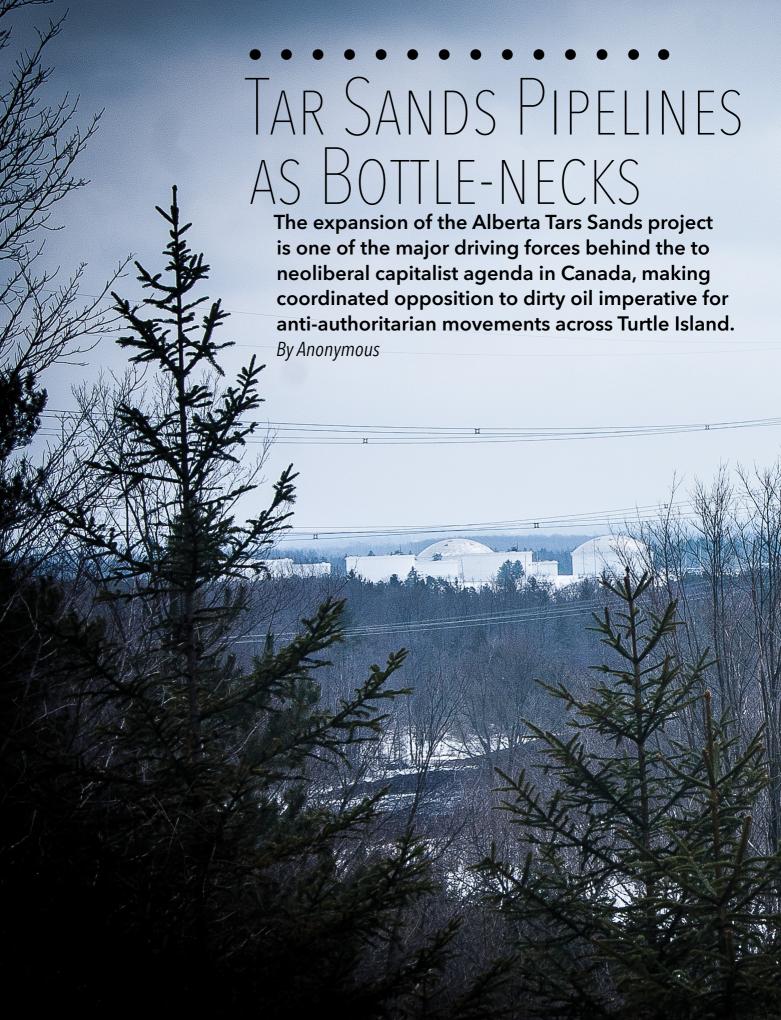
Do you have an idea for an article, but need help making it happen?

We're happy to give you a hand. Give us a shout at peakcontent@gmail.com

#### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to participate in The Peak. We welcome original illustrations and photography, and we always need proofreaders and copyeditors as well as help with event coordination and distribution of the magazine Email volunteer.peak@gmail.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 5





assessments and

and infrastructural

maintained low taxes

support for the Tar Sands.

It also cut eligibility for

Old Age Security, and Employment Insurance,

among other changes.

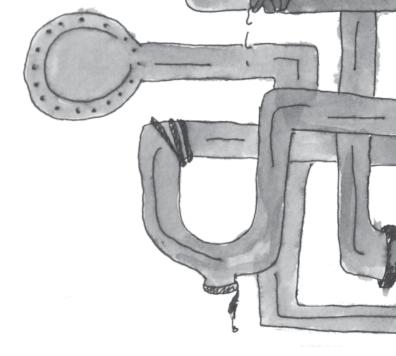
analysis of the current

prison expansion, check

out EPIC out of Kingston, www.endthepic.

→ For an anarchist

wordpress.com



RHAPS MORE THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN ITS HISTORY, the Canadian state has invested its future in a single massive industrial project. The Alberta Tar Sands¹ is increasingly the driver of Canada's economy, a symbol of its national identity, and central to how it seeks to position itself globally in the future. As pipeline projects advance across the continent, there is a pressing need for us to understand how, in opposing the transportation of Tar Sands oil, we have an unparalleled opportunity to disrupt the capitalist political system in this country. This is especially important in Ontario, where presently the movement against the pipelines is weakest.

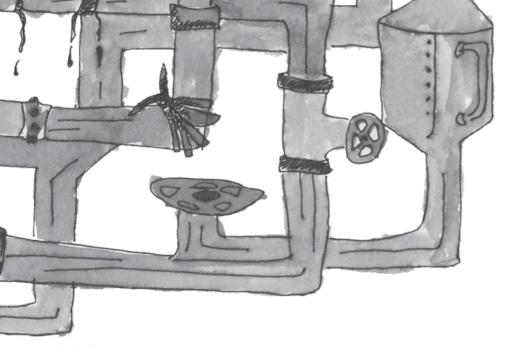
Up to now, the Tar Sands oil has been largely landlocked, its price suppressed by the glut of supply this has created in the markets that can access it. The elites in Canada see this inability to access broader markets as hurting their profits, as it reduces their ability to reinvest in expanding the Tar Sands. From the perspective of the powerful, Tar Sands oil must have access to ports in order for the project to expand. The Canadian government has also been finalizing free-trade deals with China and the European Union, so the buyers are lined up once the oil is available.

Opposition to the extraction and transportation of Tar Sands oil has largely been seen as an environmental issue, with an emphasis on climate change and carbon emissions. Sustained resistance by Indigenous communities has made the issues of Indigenous sovereignty impossible to ignore in the Athabasca basin and in the regions crossed by the pipelines. In the past year, struggles against Tar Sands pipelines have intensified across Canada and the United States, and more reasons for opposing the Tar Sands have blossomed with each new community in struggle.

The Tar Sands is not just an environmental issue, and it does not just affect the areas around its pipelines. The Tar Sands have become increasingly central to how power exists in the Canadian territory. The current push to build pipelines is a crucial moment for both the financial and political systems, and for the movements that oppose them.

I don't want to be another voice claiming that one issue is the centrepiece of the system of domination. However, escalation in the production and movement of Tar Sands oil is very real and current, and it has links in almost every part of Canadian society. Here are a few examples:

- Austerity cuts to social programs are made with the same stroke of the pen that removes environmental oversight from pipeline projects and that sends massive subsidies and incentives to oil and pipeline companies.<sup>2</sup>
- The government prepares for the fallout of scrapping social programs by expanding the prison system<sup>3</sup>. Those most affected by prison will continue to be Indigenous communities and people of colour, and these communities will also continue to bear the brunt of the toxicity associated with oil refining and manufacturing related to Tar Sands production. A company owned by an Enbridge executive has already received a contract to build a new prison in Nova Scotia following the passage of Bill C-10, the crime bill<sup>4</sup>.
- Currently, about ten thousand men from Atlantic Provinces are employed in the Tar



Sands<sup>5</sup>, being coerced through economic necessity to spend their lives in boomtowns like Fort McMurray, in an atmosphere dominated by drug addiction, organized crime, and sexual violence. These social problems then travel back home with them.

- Currently, there are several pipelines (including the Pacific Trails 6 being built to supply the insatiable Tar Sands with natural gas. However, some industry estimates still say that even with this added supply, they'll be out of gas there in less than thirty years. The state intends to respond to this by building as many as twelve nuclear power plants. This waste will likely be stored on the shores of Lake Huron 7, and this escalation of nuclear power will likely fuel a new phase of nuclear armament as powerful countries vie for dwindling resources.
- The rhetoric of Canadian oil for Canadian consumers is preparing for a global future of ever increasing inequality. Alongside assuring its "have" status, Canada is moving to secure its borders, restricting freedom of movement and cracking down on migrants. The constitution of a national identity around privileged access to to a decisive energy resource is inseparable from xenophobic, racist policies.
- Other areas in Canada are undergoing a boom in destructive extractive industries, particularly in the north. The Ring of Fire 8 developments in Ontario and le Plan Nord9

- in Québec are two important examples. Financially and politically, these projects are deeply tied to the Tar Sands. It is only by maintaining privileged access to oil for industry that the Canadian state can envision these projects being at all viable over the long time frames imagined for them.
- → Most of the factors discussed above affect Indigenous people disproportionately, because of the long-standing racist, colonial stratification of Canadian society. Native people who resist the Tar Sands and other incursions on their land and sovereignty are increasingly being treated as terrorists by the state, with huge amounts of intelligence resources dedicated to disrupting and suppressing their movements¹0.

The Tar Sands pipelines are critical places, and the moment to move against them is while they are being built or repurposed.

So if we recognize that the Tar Sands is a vital choke point for the political, economic, and industrial systems in this country, how do we position ourselves against it?

A key strategic principle is to bring decisive force to bear against your enemy at critical times and places. For those of us who see the Canadian state and economy as our enemies, the Tar Sands

J Richard Bird is the **Executive VP and** Chief Financial Officer at Enbridge. He also owns Bird Construction, which was handed a 38.5 million dollar contract to build in Nova Scotia the first prison stemming from Bill C-10. This paper studies the migration of workers from Nova Scotia to the Tar Sands region: www.justlabour.yorku. ca/volume17/pdfs/08\_ ferguson\_press.pdf For more information about opposition to the Pacific Trails pipeline, www.intercontinentalcry. org/pacific-trailspipeline-drillers-evictedfrom-wetsuwetenterritorywww. unistotencamp.

wordpress.com

pipelines are critical places, and the moment to move against them is while they are being built or repurposed. This work is being done now and over the next couple of years. We will only have one such opportunity to stop this oil from reaching ports.

Three main paths for Tar Sands oil are actively being pursued at this time. The western path is known as the Northern Gateway and would see The sheer monstrous ridiculousness of the Northern Gateway has made the third option for moving Tar Sands oil, the eastern path, seem so reasonable by comparison that every liberal organization in the country – from the NDP to the Toronto Star – is rushing to support it.

The reversal of Enbridge's Line 9 pipeline through Ontario is by far the least politically expen-

Tar Sands oil is coming East. To all the anarchists, radical environmentalists, and militants of any sort along the Line 9 route: we have a golden opportunity to prevent the state and capitalists from further consolidating their power.

The town of Saugeen Shores currently seems to be the likely recipient of all of Canada's spent nuclear fuel.www. saveoursaugeenshores. org

On the Ring of Fire
and opposition
to it:www.toronto.
mediacoop.ca/story/firstnations-oppose-ring-firemining-projects/11622
For updates on
opposition to the Plan
Nord: www.tinyurl.com/
cg8y2q6

An article about the escalation of spying against Indigenous people: tinyurl.com/cuohv8d

this dirty, toxic sludge transported across the Rocky Mountains, across the headwaters of countless rivers and streams, through the unceded territory of several Indigenous nations, to reach a port in one of the world's most hazardous waterways. To the south, the oil would travel down the Keystone XL pipeline, crossing ecologically sensitive regions everywhere along its route and dispossessing hundreds of people of their land.

Both the western and southern paths have encountered massive resistance, especially from Indigenous Peoples. In particular, the Yinka-Dene alliance forms an unbroken wall of Indigenous nations blocking access of Tar Sands oil to the Canadian Pacific coast. Opposition to the Northern Gateway is so strong that even the opportunistic provincial government of British Columbia has jumped on the bandwagon to oppose the federal government's plan.

Another important strategic truth is that "an attacker willing to pay the price can always penetrate the strongest defences." But it's also true that "defense is the stronger form of combat" and on the west coast, the defensive mobilization is already formidable, and even the arrogant, colonial federal conservative government would hesitate to provoke such an enormous confrontation with Indigenous nations.

sive and logistically simplest of the three routes for Tar Sands oil. It just involves reversing existing pipelines from Sarnia to Hamilton then on to Montreal. From there, another pipeline could be reversed to carry the oil to Portland, Maine where it would have easier access to Atlantic ports. A plan identical to the current Line 9 reversals was proposed back in 2008, but was withdrawn after the economic collapse and in the face of heated opposition.

We need to stop the movement of Tar Sands oil no matter what route it takes. Though we might argue about the risks of a spill to a particular sensitive area to gain local support, it doesn't matter if it's crossing pristine mountain streams or Hamilton Harbour. The Tar Sands is an ecological and social nightmare that benefits only the elites, and it's going to get worse if its market is allowed to expand.

Tar Sands oil is coming East. To all the anarchists, radical environmentalists, and militants of any sort along the Line 9 route: we have a golden opportunity to prevent the state and capitalists from further consolidating their power. Enbridge intends Line 9 to be fully ready for Tar Sands oil by the Spring of 2014, so our time frame is tight. There will not be very many easy sites of intervention (like construction projects, for instance) so we need to be ready in our home communities to act quickly when these chances present themselves.  $\Delta$ 

## **Enridge Line 9 Fact Sheet**

#### **HISTORY AND IMPACT**

- Line 9 was built in 1976
- Been decommissioned for over a year
- Industry in Alberta is pushing Enbridge to open up the pipeline again, and reverse the flow so it will travel West to East
- Line 9 traditionally has carried conventional crude oil it was built long before the tar sands boom in Alberta
- Enbridge has stated in the media that they have industry support backing them for shipping tar sands oil across Ontario
- 2008 Trailbreaker pipeline proposal, shelved in 2009 due to low industry demands
- Line 9 phase 1 reversal runs from Sarnia to a terminal in Westover. This phase was approved in August, 2012
- Phase 2 of the reversal travels from Westover to Montréal
- Enbridge is dividing up a massive reversal into smaller pieces to avoid a full environmental assessment
- if the reversal is extended its full length, up to 240,000 barrels (38.2 million litres) of crude oil could flow through small communities in Ontario and Québec every day

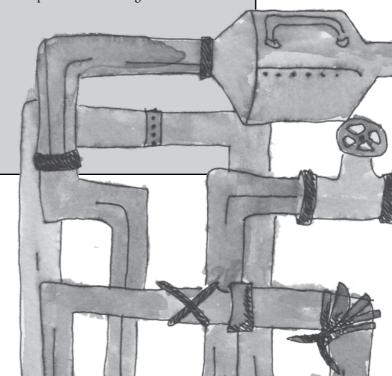
#### **LOCATION**

The line 9 pipeline is located directly across the street from the Aamjiwnaang First Nation

- Line 9 crosses the Haldimand Tract (land held in treaty by the Haudenosaunee) north of Brantford
- the pipeline puts twelve major watersheds at risk, including the Grand River and the Thames River

#### INDIGENOUS LAND ISSUES

- The Haudenosaunee, (who hold the land according to the Haldimand Proclamation) are requesting that Enbridge and the national Energy Board engage with their treaty rights
- line is directly adjacent to the Aamjiwnaang
  First Nation in Sarnia, which has sixty three
  chemical refineries with in fifty kilometers of
  their community and was named the most
  polluted place in canada by the World Health
  Organization. Community reports find that
  forty percent of the population requires inhalers, and that thirty-nine percent of women
  have experienced miscarriages











HIS PAST SUMMER, WESTOVER, A SMALL RURAL COmmunity in the Flamborough region of Hamilton, suddenly became an important site of struggle in the continent-wide campaign against the expansion of the Alberta Tar Sands. This is because Westover is home to a massive pipeline terminal, fuel storage site, and pump station operated by Enbridge, and it is central to Enbridge's plan to move Tar Sands oil east through Ontario by reversing their Line 9 pipeline.

Activists in Hamilton are working to build connections and raise awareness about the reversal in the Westover area, and although this process has been rewarding, it hasn't always been easy. So far, two public events have focused attention on Westover: the first was a bike ride to the terminal on October 21st, 2012 by Hamilton 350, and the second was an information session on February 22nd, held at the Westover Women's Institute and hosted by Hamilton 350 and Environmental Defence.

Elysia Petrone is a local climate change activist with Hamilton 350, Council of Canadians, and Environmental Defense who worked on both of the events in Westover. I asked her why she decided to make organizing in Westover a priority.

"One reason we really wanted to go to Westover was that the first time we went to Hamilton city council on this issue, Councillor Pasuta said that no one from his riding had mentioned it. 'I havent received one phone call' he said. That was concerning, that no one along the line actually knew about it [...]" This observation led to

PHOTOS Enbridge pipeline markers as it passes under a roadway in Flamborough by Bryan Hill

the bike ride to the terminal: "At that time, we met a group of hostile Enbridge employees who were community members and they wanted to challenge us."

This counter-protest demonstrated how strong Enbridge's influence was in the Westover area. "[...] we had protestors greet us with a sign that said, 'Go Home Protestors', with a truck blocking the entrance to the picnic table area in front of the terminal, and they had baseball bats, saying they were playing a baseball game, but they were standing there with signs saying, 'We support Enbridge and we support Canadian oil."

Those who participated in the bike ride spent several hours at the terminal, discussing the issues of the Tar Sands and Line 9 with those who had initially come out to oppose them. This dialogue revealed a real need to counter Enbridge's misinformation. The information meeting in February was organized to follow up on this need.

"I was really impressed with the turnout," Elysia said. "Probably about a hundred people came and we filled the tiny Westover Women's Institute[...] There was a lot of appreciation from the people who attended. They said, we've only had one side, thanks for showing us the other. We focused a lot on the Kalamazoo River spill and the risk to their watersheds. Farmers rely heavily on access to clean water, and many people in the area are on wells, so a spill would be really significant to them."

At the event, the organizers showed a video about the Kalamazoo oil spill, emphasizing how much more difficult it is to clean up diluted



bitumen (dilbit) from the Tar Sands than conventional oil. Adam Scott from Environmental Defence spoke, focusing on the ways that transporting dilbit through this area is threat to the health of the millions of people who rely on the rivers and streams of Southern Ontario for their drinking water. Finally, Scott Peck of the Hamilton Conservation Authority described the HCA's January decision to call for the results of Enbridge's tests on the integrity of Line 9 to be made public.

However, the kind of counter-organizing they experienced at the bike ride was still a factor. Elysia described encountering "four young guys in their late twenties who came to our information session with beer, stood in the backs with their arms crossed, and left their trucks outside idling. They did it as a statement [...] We discussed a lot before hand what acts we would take to deal with disruptors. We had an action plan that included calling the police if necessary. We asked everyone who attended to wear name tags, and we served coffee, tea and snacks from the bakery next door. Having a strong moderator helped a lot. It helped to thank everyone for coming, to ask for respectful dialogue, asking to maintain speaking order, and keeping people on both sides to the time limit."

"There's backlash against everything," she continued. "Why are you protesting, why aren't you offering solutions, you used gas to come here, that kind of thing. [...] People want to call out hypocrisy, which mostly people in the environmental movement are already aware of. The problem might be



**OPENNING SPREAD** The Westover pump station operated by Enbridge by Bryan Hill

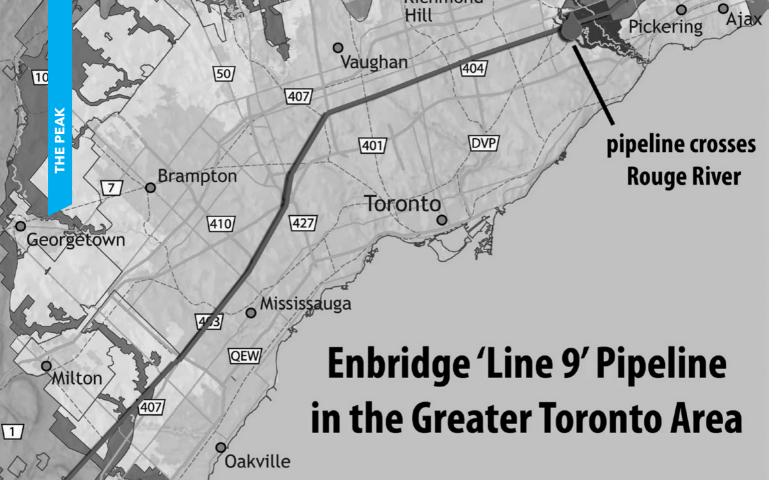
that we're not coming with solutions. But I can see what's wrong. We're investing in the fossil fuel industry who are corrupting the government, who are investing in anti-climate change science. As long as we're investing in fossil fuels, it's time lost, time that we're not looking at green alternatives and not asking how to come off of our addiction to oil."

Looking towards the spring and summer, a new round of National Energy Board hearings will be held on the reversal of Line 9 and on the transportation of dilbit. As well, Enbridge will continue with their integrity digs, and possibly begin construction on their pump stations in Westover and elsewhere to accommodate the denser dilbit. Where does the Line 9 campaign in Westover go from here?

"We're also thinking of organizing a rally at the Westover terminal," Elysia said, speaking to the need to make the Westover terminal a site of struggle. "The line goes across the province, but there's going to be work done here, so it's a point of intervention to stop construction. They used to say they'd be starting this January, then in Burlington they said they wouldn't do any work until 2014, but what's it to them to just say whatever time?"

With opportunities to intervene to really stop this process so scarce, it will be important to maintain a presence in Westover and to keep watch on the work being done there.  $\Delta$ 

POINTS OF INTERVENTION 15





TOP LEFT Map showing where pipeline crosses the Rouge River near Toronto By Environmental Defence

BOTTEM LEFT Pipeline Dangrously exposed at the Rouge River By Environmental Defence

## **Against the Reversal**

The Line 9 project is being sold as a boon to Southern Ontario's economy, but what are the potential social and environmental impacts of transporting Tar Sands oil through our region? By Anonymous

CROSS NORTH AMERICA, PEOPLE ARE mobilizing to stop the flow of Tar Sands oil. Here in Southern Ontario, we need to do our part to choke off this disastrous project. Enbridge and the federal government are pushing for diluted bitumen from the Tar Sands to be carried in the Line 9 pipeline, which flows from Sarnia to Montréal through the most heavily populated area in Canada.

This is an opportunity for us to act in solidarity with the Indigenous-led resistance to destructive environmental projects like the Northern Gateway pipeline in British Columbia and with all those in the United States struggling against the Keystone XL pipeline project.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In late July 2012, the National Energy Board (NEB) approved Enbridge's proposal to reverse the flow of their Line 9 pipeline all the way from Sarnia to Montréal. The proposal is part of a plan to move Tar Sands oil from Alberta to ports on the Atlantic coast. On its way, this oil will have to go through Hamilton, stopping at the Westover Terminal near Westover Road and Concession 6 West in

The human and environmental costs of the Tar Sands are staggering...

Flamborough.

The Alberta Tar Sands "gigaproject" is the largest industrial project in human history and likely also the most destructive. The Tar Sands mining procedure releases at least three times the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as regular oil production and is slated to become the single largest industrial contributor in North America to climate change (oilsandstruth.org). The human and environmental costs of the Tar Sands are staggering, and there is an accelerating movement to stop the flow of Tar Sands oil to refineries in the United States – if oil companies can't transport it, they can't afford to take it out of the ground.

There has already been historic opposition to the Northern Gateway pipeline that would carry Tar Sands oil west to Vancouver, and to the Keystone XL (the fourth phase of the Keystone Pipeline project) that would carry it south to

Nebraska. It is in the context of this powerful resistance, especially the unbroken wall of Indigenous communities (the Yinka-Dene Alliance) blocking any route to the Pacific ocean, that Enbridge is dusting off their old Trailbreaker pipeline proposal.

Enbridge first proposed Trailbreaker in 2008 with the explicit intent to carry Tar Sands oil east by way of Sarnia, Westover, and Montreal, and to reverse another pipeline to take it across the border to Portland, Maine. However, united opposition to the proposal, combined with skepticism about the safety of this project from even the typically corrupt environmental regulators, led Enbridge to use the financial collapse of 2008 as a pretense to shelve it.

Enbridge began advancing this same project in small steps: first they sought approval to reverse Line 9 between Sarnia and Westover while denying that they intended to go any further; once that was approved, they sought to reverse the line between Westover and Montreal while refusing to talk about shipping diluted bitumen (dilbit) to Maine. Until recently, they even refused to admit that their plan was to carry dilbit from the Tar Sands through the line at all.

AGAINST THE REVERSAL 17



LEFT Sign on the Rouge River pipeline development by Environmental Defense

What the Tar Sands produce is not yet oil; it is a dense, grainy substance called bitumen that needs substantial further treatment at refineries to become oil. To ship the bitumen in pipelines, it must be mixed with a dilutant, the a substance has about the same consistency as peanut butter. In 2010, Enbridge's Line 6b, almost identical to Line 9 in age and design, ruptured over the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. Line 6b was carrying diluted bitumen from the Tar Sands, and the ensuing disaster shows how the risks of transporting dilbit are not the same as the risks of transporting conventional oil.

When the spill occurred, the dilbit was no longer under the pressure it was inside the pipeline, and so the dilutant and the bitumen separated from each other. The bitumen sank to the bottom of the river and has since proven impossible to clean up; to this day, the bitumen is still at the bottom of the Kalamazoo River, helpfully covered in sand by Enbridge in a flimsy and literal "cover up". The dilutant, meanwhile, became a toxic gas and spread rapidly through the surrounding area, contributing to the deaths of several nearby residents and resulting in seizures and permanent respiratory problems for many others.

With these enhanced risks, one would expect some sort of enhanced regulation for the proposal to carry dibit through Canada's most populated region, but, in fact, the opposite is the case: the Environmental Assessment for the Line 9 reversal was scrapped in the omnibus

Even if jobs materialize, they will only expose the few people who receive them to risky, toxic work in a precarious environment.

budget bill C-38, meaning that the only approval needed for this project is from the National Energy Board (NEB), which has neither the mandate nor the resources to meaningfully oversee a project this important. We cannot trust the NEB to look out for our interests.

## ARE THERE REALLY ADVANTAGES FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO?

The nationalist claim, that Tar Sands oil is somehow more ethical than oil from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia is an attempt to dress up an economic incentive in altruistic clothes. Oil from the Tar Sands is currently much cheaper than overseas oil, creating immense opportunities

for profit in Canada's energy sector. We won't be paying less for gasoline, but the profit margin for oil and gas companies will increase. It is obscene to claim that oil extracted from Alberta in a destructive process that poisons the Indigenous communities downstream, is more ethical than other forms of oil production. Such a claim also ignores the ethical issues associated with continuing to expand the oil economy at a time when climate change makes it obvious that a major downshift in consumption is necessary.

Politicians are trying to sell the Line 9 reversal with the argument that it will create jobs. The jobs oil profiteers claim will be created are in Sarnia and Nanticoke, working in heavily toxic atmospheres amid downward pressure on wages, benefits, and worker protections. The same federal and provincial governments that promise us these jobs are undercutting the ability of workers to collectively organize or to strike to protect themselves. Even if these jobs materialize, they will only expose the few people who receive them to risky, toxic work in a precarious environment.

The Line 9 reversal has nothing to offer our communities. Only the Canadian government and its partners in big oil have anything to gain by involving Southern Ontario in the Tar Sands racket, but all of us will share the costs, especially as this dirty oil makes catastrophic climate change inevitable.  $\Delta$ 

## Aamjiwnaang/Sarnia Line 9 Gathering

A conference held in Aamjiwnaang to strategize against Line 9 resulted in the establishment of an anti-pipeline network that is working towards province-wide goals. To be part of this network, get in touch with Guelph GAP at guelphgap@gmail.com. By Zel

#### DAY 1, FRIDAY MARCH 15TH

HIS DAY WAS DESCRIBED BY VANESSA from Aamjiwnaang First Nations and one of the organizers of the convergence as something she had been "dreaming of doing for years." Vanessa seized the opportunity to show people what home has looked like for her and her community since before they realized that "not everyone has refining stations in their backyards," or lives with the everyday occurrence of chemical spill sirens.

The Toxic Tour in Chemical Valley where Aamjiwnaang is located was opened and closed with ceremony. I arrived late and therefore did not attend. However, I was told by people who were there that the smoke hung so thick in the air that it got caught in one's lungs. The processing plants were vast and metal, the shiny glint of their outer walls not betraying the sinister things that happen inside, or the nature of the toxins that are pumped into the air.

This is environmental racism, pure and simple, Vanessa explains. To add any Tar Sands infrastructure is to add insult to injury. Instead of expanding industry in flagrant disregard of Indigenous sovereignty and environmental health, we need to be halting such development, and reducing the infrastructure used to support it.

### DAY 2, SATURDAY MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>

Communities from all across Southern Ontario came to partake in discussions

about Line 9 and how to stop its reversal. We introduced ourselves and brainstormed ideas and strategies. We took stock of what we had done, what we plan to do, and what challenges might be standing in the way. We broke into action groups to flesh out details for different approaches to the issue at hand. We worked out the ways in which our myriad approaches overlap and complement one another. A research collective was formed, for example. If you are interested in partaking in any of the collectives that formed over the course of the weekend, feel free to get in touch with us via Guelph GAP. We finished our breakout sessions with report-backs and spent valuable face time connecting our communities around our common goal of stopping Line 9.

## DAY 3, SUNDAY MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>

We discussed possible actions that we can take to support our efforts - from handing out leaflets to engaging strategic points of interest. Different action ideas were discussed as people from different locales extended offers of support and mobilization from their own communities. "Surprise is our best tool", one attendee explained. This is one reason that I am not publishing more details here.

We are working with the following timeline (with local and regional demonstrations planned throughout):

- March 21: deadline for info session (April): An independent person has been hired to explain intervention process info about the pipeline.
- April 6: Common Causes Day of Action in Ontario
- April 11: deadline to apply for public participation in the National Energy Board hearings
- May 14: deadline for information requests to Enbridge (Interventions)
- Late May-June: Line 9 Speaking tour
- June 25: Deadline for Enbridge to reply to requests
- July 9: Deadline to file letter of comment and for interveners to file evidence to the NEB
- NEB makes its decision. (Sometime between now and March 2014)
- → TBA: Stop Line 9

However we choose to act, the need is urgent. Line 9 poses serious risks to the health of environment and community all along its route. Line 9 would be part of a larger infrastructural project that would allow the Tar Sands to continue to expand.

In favour of Indigenous sovereignty, a more just and equitable world, and one in which we are empowered and healthy, stop Line 9!  $\Delta$ 



## Community Picket Line Held at Hamilton High School

by Devin K

ROUND THIRTY PEOPLE WALKED THE PICKET LINES AT SIR JOHN A. McDonald high school in Hamilton on the morning of Wednesday January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Rather than representing an official union on strike, the picket was organized by an assortment of community members acting autonomously. Picketers blocked the paths of cars for two minutes each, snarling morning rush hour traffic on Cannon Street and creating a line up that lasted into first period that day. The action demonstrated the potential for acting outside of official bodies meant to represent workers and the laws that inhibit those bodies.

January 16<sup>th</sup> had been slated for a one-day strike by the Ontario Secondary School Teacher Federation (OSSTF). The action had been called by the union as a result of a rank-and-file petition demanding that union leadership respond to the imposition of Bill 115 (which would have following the announcement of a similar action by elementary school teachers for January 11<sup>th</sup>), the provincial government went to the Labour Relations Board to have both declared illegal. Unfortunately the unwillingness of labour leadership to openly defy such a ruling meant that both unions backed down from the threatened job action.

The complicity of the state and the official channels meant to mediate labour conflict in acting against workers is a defining feature of our current era of austerity. Bill 115 and other such legislation have implications beyond the workers that they target, and it's therefore in the interests of our entire class to find creative and militant ways to defy them. The pickets at Sir John A. McDonald exemplified an effective and easily reproducible tactic that, if it were to spread geographically and transcend particular workplaces

or struggles, is capable of seriously throwing a wrench in corrupt mediation processes.

The picket line on the  $16^{\rm th}$  was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from teachers as they made their way into work. Police had one unit stationed to keep watch on the situation, but the picket continued uninterrupted until it was voluntarily taken down shortly after 9am.

The following is the text of a leaflet handed out by picketers that offers more analysis of the action and the labour relations that created it.

## OUR COMMUNITY, OUR SCHOOLS, OUR STRUGGLE!

Community members are standing outside your school today because the government said that teachers can't. The teachers are not alone in this struggle: first the federal government ordered the airline workers, then the postal workers, and finally the Canadian Pacific workers back to work. Now it's the teachers' turn. The trend is clear. Government and business are on the offensive, moving labour relations (and everything else, it seems) from a framework of consent to coercion. Those of us in non-unionized workplaces have long been aware of this trend.

The response from union officials has been ineffective. Gone are the days when the leadership of the unions would call on members to defy unjust governments, as when the teachers' unions staged illegal walkouts during the Mike Harris era to great effect. Our union leaders, and too many union members, are willing to accept the rules laid down by governments. We should all be able to agree that we are never going to win by rolling out

the same failed union strategies over and over again — that of negotiation and legal manoeuvring. Governments and businesses are changing the rules, and we must adapt or else end up like our sister movement across the border, where unions are virtually non-existent and schools are figuratively and literally falling apart.

Our presence today at your school shows that we can respond creatively to governments that make it illegal to withdraw our labour. We hope our community picket can be the start of a conversation about how we all find creative and effective ways to fight back, beyond the straightjacket of labour law and special laws. What if communities across the city and across the province picketed our schools? What if we shut down government buildings and the corporate operations of their business backers? What if students went on strike as they did for over six months in Québec (and won)? What if the teachers went on strike for a day and the teacher unions organized childcare drop-offs for parents? What if teachers taught extra-curricular activities during class time by, say,

cutting each period fifteen minutes short? What if teachers, students and the community took over our schools on PA days and used them as spaces to organize and educate against austerity?

You don't have to agree with or like all of these tactics. The point is that we have options and can come up with new ones. We don't have to accept defeat because our union leaders can't or are afraid to come up with better, more militant strategies or because the government is changing the rules of the game. In fact, as teachers surely know, social movements have always made gains when they refused the established rules. By fighting against Bill 115, teachers have been saying that they must fight to defend the democratic rights that they teach their students about in class. Now we are standing here outside your workplace to demonstrate that when the law becomes unjust, the just must refuse to obey the law. And if teachers fight effectively and make this fight about all of us — about students, about parents, about the quality of education--the community will come to stand behind you.  $\Delta$ 





Photo: Silvara Bailey



S A FOLLOW-UP TO THE VOLUME 52 ISSUE 3 of The Peak, which looks at gentrification as it plays out in the City of Guelph, I present a selection of actions taken by poor folks, anarchists and others against gentrification as it happens in their cities. These are included here to present some ideas for actions coming out of a complex and dire situation we see play out in this city's downtown core and neighbourhoods such at the Ward, located east of downtown. The most inspiring part of these actions is simply the fact that these folks have moved past fear and inhibition into action, and have confronted the rich developers.

## TORONTO SOLIDARITY ACTION

January 27th, 2013 - Overnight, another blow was struck against the ongoing social war against the poor in the city of Toronto. The presentation center of another new boutique loft development in the heart of downtown had its windows smashed and front, signage and designer display kitchen paint-bombed as another small gesture of our rage. We again disappeared with no trace into the night, leaving only the falling shards and a few stunned onlookers in our wake...

This act was in solidarity with a homeless individual who froze to death on the streets of Toronto this week, who was also deemed too unimportant to be named by the media or police. This happened while life saving shelter, like this, stood empty, as a glimmer of a lifestyle and the individual, stylized and sanitized, living environment we are all meant to aspire to and work hard to earn our way towards. It also stands as a mocking kick in the face to every cold and shelterless individual walking past it this winter. This man was a silent victim of the war declared upon all of us, the war of capitalism, profit and greed...

For the reclamation of space everywhere and until all are free..

-The Toronto Solidarity Cell\*

## ATTACK ON SEATTLE "GREEN" DEVELOPMENT

Just before midnight, Monday February 25<sup>th</sup>, we strolled over to the townhouses under construction on 24<sup>th</sup> and Norman in the Central District. After slipping inside, we set one ablaze. Oh what ease! Oh what fun!

Sustainable development is a myth that makes us sick. By furthering gentrification and ecological destruction, these buildings dress disaster up as progress, promising a "green" future that will never be.

Our attack was just one more opportunity to joyously reject the status quo. It was another attempt to shed the subjugated subjectivity forced upon us by Capital and the State. We act against civil society and its attempts at domestication. Fuck that shit.

Solidarity with Maddy, Kerry, and

all the silent ones still facing repression by the Federal Grand Jury. We will not cower in fear. We will not remain docile in the face of State terror.

Now is the time to attack! Enemies abound. Weapons are everywhere.

Join us?

-Some Anarchists

#### ANTI-GENTRIFICATION ATTACK AGAINST KONO, OAKLAND

February 28th, 2013 - The racist drive for capital and its methods of "development" have erased, exploited, and colonized our neighborhoods since the birth of the modern city. After taking the best land for themselves, the rich stuff us into ghettos and barrios where they criminalize our survival and suffocate us of any resources. Gentrification is a process whereby the rich resurrect the dead property values our neighborhoods to make money, by encouraging better off white people to move in, taking our homes, and funneling our bodies into the prison industrial complex. The Koreatown Northgate project, or KONO, is one appendage to the monster that is gentrification attempting to connect Downtown Oakland with the Temescal shopping district.

Last night, less than 24 hours before First Friday, a property management office that promotes gentrification along the KONO corridor was attacked by breaking the windows, setting off a fire extinguisher and shooting paint into the office. Forcing the office to close during its main monthly event, the gentrifying force that is First Fridays, was done to show these rich bastards that Oakland will not be gentrified without a fight.

video: www.indybay.org/news-items/2013/03/01/18732934.php

-not white

#### VANCOUVER, BC: PIDGIN PICKETS ENTER INTO WEEK SIX

PiDGiN is an upscale restaurant located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) at the intersection of Carrell & Hastings. PiDGin is located just across the street from Pidgeon Park, an iconic public space where mostly poor residents from the neighbourhood gather, live and exist. PiDGiN represents just one part of a wave of new high end retail, restaurant and condo developments trying to turn one of Canada's most iconic poor neighbourhoods into a social hub for the rich. As policing becomes more aggressive and

abusive, rent goes up and affordable stores go under, the clear tensions between the rich and poor become apparent, as the poor are pushed out.

Sells a plate of pickles for 6 dollars and main dishes for 40 dollars, PiDGiN represents a tension in the downtown east side. March 16<sup>th</sup> marked the sixth week of consecutive pickets outside of PiDGiN restaurant by DTES residents, an attempt to disrupt their business and make their customers reconsider eating there. When hip new restaurants and retail stores rely so heavily on their image, we can pinch their bottom line by shattering the myth that gentrification isn't happening here.

#### VANCOUVER, BC: ANTI-GENTRIFICATION FRONT STRIKES AGAIN

March 12th 2013 - For all too long now yuppies have been peacefully going about their gourmet dinners, buying up their lucky condos and flaunting their wealth by driving around in expensive cars. We thought it would be great to remind them AGF is still here. So last night, for the third time, Famoso Neapolitan Pizzeria was attacked. Several of its windows and one of its cameras were smashed (Causing 17,000 dollars in damages). Famoso thought that putting up their pathetic cameras would stop our

Gentrification: the civilization of wild terrain, colonization, the shift; scary/undesirable/unknown to "the new frontier in fine dining", the process that makes the displacement of a social class inevitable and acceptable, even to the displaced.

attacks. They haven't and never will. We are also inspired by the picketers of the new yuppie restaurant in the downtown east side called Pidgin. They have been giving yuppies a taste of the class war for weeks now.

Over the last week City of Vancouver, who promotes gentrification with their Grandview Woodland community plan, were also were visited by the AGF. Two of their trucks had their windows smashed (six all together, including two windshields) and one of their tractors had their huge window shattered.

This is a fucking class war and we will not stop until we are free from class, the state and all others who oppress us. Your time will come.

PiDGiN its time you fly away or face the consequences.

-AGF

#### **SIGN SWIPE**

March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013: On a recent eve, a small group of merry mischief making anarchists made off into the night with a prominent piece of gentrification propaganda: the Save-on Meats a-board.

Gentrification: the civilization of wild terrain, colonization, the shift; scary/undesirable/unknown to "the new fron-

tier in fine dining", the process that makes the displacement of a social class inevitable and acceptable, even to the displaced.

And entrepreneur voyeur, Mark Brand of Save-On Meats, continues his crusade against the poor; masquerading as a savior with his paternalistic, segregating token program, and his multiple gentrifying businesses in the DTES-area...

EVEN IF the gentrifiers think they are doing right by the present residents of the DTES, their very presence is a key ingredient in an ongoing movement to displace the existing residents and create a newly fashioned enclave for outsiders.

We will not stop. We will



\*in our last issue we published another communiqué from this group and a link to a lively discussion about the term militaristic in the context of social struggles. The Toronto Solidarity Cell responds to this use of words in their communiqué found on our website]

## **News Briefs:**

## Spring Issue

Compiled from mainstream and grassroots media sources, The Peak's News Briefs highlight news relevant to anti-authoritarian resistance and marginalized communities. Submit your callouts, report-backs, and news briefs to peakcontent@gmail.com By Peggy K

#### JAN. 16- MARCH 25<sup>™</sup>:

January 16th: seven Cree youth began marching the almost 1,600 kilometres from Northern Quebec to Ottawa. Now numbering nearly 200, the "Journey of the Nishiyuu" (which means "Journey Of The People" in Cree) celebrates and promotes traditional Cree culture, language, and values. For more information on their journey, check out www.nishiyuu.ca

#### JANUARY 26TH

Guelph: A billboard advertising a "Reid's Heritage Homes" development on the outskirts of Guelph was paint-bombed in solidarity with the Grand Jury resisters in the Pacific Northwest.

#### FEBRUARY 3RD

Toronto: Idle No More protesters and anti-nuclear activists blocked the Canadian-Pacific rail line near the Toronto's General Electric-Hitachi nuclear plant for several hours. "Uranium is stolen from indigenous lands and it leaks radiation all along the fuel chain," said anti-nuclear activist Zach Ruiter.

#### **FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

**Attawapiskat:** Residents of the Attawapiskat reserve erected a blockade of a winter road

leading to the De Beers diamond mine near their reserve, preventing fuel and other supplies from reaching the mine. A second blockade was erected February 11<sup>th</sup>. Both blockades ended between February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, after court injunctions were issued against protesters.

BC: Coastal First Nations (an alliance of First Nations on British Columbia's North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii) pulled out of a hearing on Enbridge's marine oil spill response plans, calling the proceedings expensive and unproductive. "We sit there with half a dozen Enbridge lawyers and 20 technical people basically stonewalling us while we try to ask questions," said CFN executive director Art Sterritt.

#### FEBRUARY 9TH

Montreal: 36 people were arrested at a Montreal demonstration against Plan Nord, Quebec's northern development initiative. One window was smashed and a flare gun was fired into a convention centre hosting a job fair for the natural resources sector.

#### FEBRUARY 13<sup>™</sup>

**BC:** A human rights organization investigating charges of systemic neglect of

missing and murdered Indigenous women in northern British Columbia reported allegations of rape and assault of women by RCMP officers in rural communities. New-York based Human Rights Watch is calling on the federal and BC provincial governments to participate in a national inquiry into the allegations.

#### FEBRUARY 14TH

Vancouver: The Downtown Eastside Women's Association marked the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of their Women's Memorial March. Seventeen memorial marches for missing and murdered Indigenous women took place across the country.

#### FEBRUARY 15<sup>™</sup>

Canada: A freedom of information request revealed that the Association of First Nations (AFN) exchanged information with the RCMP before the national Aboriginal Day of Action in 2007. According to RCMP documents, the AFN met with RCMP and Ontario and Quebec police in order to "facilitate a consistent and effective approach to managing Aboriginal protests and occupations." The June 29th Day of Action included over 100 events held across the country, like a railway and highway blockade on

Tyendinaga Mohawk territory that saw hundreds of OPP officers and a sniper squad dispatched.

Canada: Eight more countries were added to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's list of nations that are considered "safe" for refugees. Countries designated "safe" are considered able to protect their citizens from violence and discrimination, making refugee claimants from those countries less likely to be approved. The addition of Mexico (alongside countries like Iceland, Japan, and Israel) is cause for concern among human rights and refugee advocacy organizations, who note that escalating violence in that country contributes to the almost 9,000 refugee claims Canada received from Mexico in 2012.

#### FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>-22<sup>ND</sup>

Canada: The 11th annual Homelessness Marathon, a cross-Canada radio event, broadcasted on themes of "Indigenous land struggles and rights movement, the housing situation on Aboriginal reservations, prison and homelessness, street-based sex work, criminalization of poverty and homelessness, access to homeless shelters for transgendered and transsexual people, and much more." To listen, check out ckut.ca/homeless and the cfru.ca archives.

#### FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>

Toronto: City Hall votes to provide basic services to undocumented residents. The city's implementation of a "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding immigration status means that the estimated 200,000 undocumented residents of the Greater Toronto Area will be able to access services like shelters without fear of deportation. The vote passed 37 to 3, making Toronto the first "sanctuary city" in Canada.

#### FEBRUARY 22ND

Simcoe, ON: Members of Toronto and Guelph-based migrant justice organizations gathered in Simcoe to confront Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development about her decision to cut Employment Insurance benefits for seasonally migrating workers. Seasonal workers, whose labour is used in agricultural centres like Norfolk county, have been paying into EI since 1966. (See "Report-back from Simcoe" on page 26.)

#### FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>-MARCH 5<sup>TH</sup>

Montreal: After the Parti Quebecois announced their intentions to raise tuition fees this fall, a series of actions and demonstrations indicates that Quebec's student movement is still ready to fight. RCMP's Integrated National Security Team raided to offices of several student groups on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### MARCH 3RD

Toronto: The Toronto Sex Workers' Action Project marked the International Sex Workers Rights Day with a collective statement calling for "... the repeal of ALL prostitution offenses in Turtle Island/ Canada, including section 213 prohibiting communicating in public for the purposes of prostitution...The sex working community and our allies stand against this—because we know that safety and justice come from rights and power—not criminalization!" For more, see maggiestoronto.ca

#### MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>

Toronto: Dozens of Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) members and their supporters occupied the Metro Hall to draw attention to the death of 34 unhoused people in Toronto in 2012 and 8 already this year and challenge Rob Ford's city council to take action on Toronto's overcrowded shelter system and lack of affordable housing. The occupation was forcibly dispersed by police at 10:30pm that evening, who issued arrests and tickets.

#### MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>

Vancouver: The Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) raided a construction site in order to arrest illegal workers. The dramatic, military-style operation was accompanied by camera crews employed by Force Four Entertainment, a Vancouver-based television production company. Force Four produces "Border Wars," a federal government-approved reality-tv show. Oscar Mata, one of eight workers who were detained as a result of the raid, (and asked to sign a waiver giving consent to use footage of their arrest on television) was deported on March 20th.

#### MARCH18TH

Canada: The Idle No More movement and indigenous activists are calling for

"Sovereignty Summer," including "coordinated non-violent direct actions."

Ottawa: The Ontario court of appeal ruled that the provincial government has the authority to issue logging permits on Grassy Narrows First Nation's traditional territory. The appeal successfully overturns a 2011 Superior Court decision that sided with Grassy Narrows, and represents a major blow to First Nations treaty rights in Ontario.

#### MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>

Simcoe: Fuerza/Puwersa held an Im/migration Myth Busting Week at the University of Guelph to raise awareness about issues that impact immigrants and migrating populations in Southern Ontario and Canada. For more info, see www.facebook.com/fuerzapuwersa.guelph

#### MARCH 20TH

Canada: The House of Commons passed a bill that will make it illegal to discriminate against trans people. "Transgender and transsexual citizens are among the most marginalized and are too often victims of harassment and acts of violence," said NDP MP Randall garrison, who introduced the bill, which will add "gender identity" and "gender expression" to Canada's Human Rights Act and Criminal Code.  $\Delta$ 

## Call Out for GAP:

Link up with the Guelph Anti-Pipeline Action Group!

We are a group dedicated to environmental justice through education and action.

We challenge oil dependency and strive towards resiliency!
Get involved by contacting us directly:

guelphgap@gmail.com

## **Report Back from Simcoe:**

## Response to El Cuts for Migrant Workers

Cutting access to Employment Insurance benefits is just one of the ways that migrating workers are systematically disenfranchised. Migrant justice organizers Fuerza/Puwersa describe the theory and practice that informs their work as allies of migrating people. By Mina Vonnomechingues

N FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>, RESIDENTS OF Norfolk county and migrant justice activists from Toronto-based Justicia for Migrant Workers and Guelph-based Fuerza/Puwersa came together at the Simcoe, Ontario constituency offices of Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Diane Finley to confront her and her decision to cut Employment Insurance (EI) parental benefits for seasonally migrating workers. Finley, who also serves as the Member of Parliament for Haldimand-Norfolk, announced the cuts in mid-December, 2012.

Migrating people who work in Canada under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) have been paying into EI since the Program began in 1966. As the number of folks coming under the SAWP has grown, and as more folks are coming to work in other industries under the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP), it is estimated that those working as migrant workers pay approximately 3.4 million dollars into the

EI system each year-- now without the ability to access its parental benefits.

In 2002, those working as migrant workers became aware that they were eligible for special benefits in the form of parental benefits and benefits for those supporting ailing spouses. Since that year, these benefits became very important to individuals, particularly those working on farms. These benefits provided a bit of extra cash for folks to address their needs of themselves and their families back home. Community allies supported those working as migrant farm workers by helping them navigate the complicated application process, and as these benefits became more accessible they became very important to people. It is crucial to note, that though the benefits are important, they are meagre compared to the amount of money that folks pay into the system, and in relation to the list of unaddressed concerns raised by those working under SAWP and TFWP programs, such as housing working and health and safety conditions, and general

exclusion from community services and resources.

Diane Finley's cowardly announcement of the cut to EI benefits during the farming off-season a time when many migrant workers are in their home countries) demonstrates how the government continues to disrespect and exclude folks from decision-making around the running of these programs and the policies surrounding them,. For these reasons, migrant justice allies felt it was important to organize a timely, ally-based response and confrontation to Diane Finley and her government's decision. This ally-based action was organized to show the government that their decision does not go unnoticed and to show support people who work under the programs while they are still in their home communities. Though this action's organizing group was aware that Finley would probably be in Ottawa, and not at her constituency office, it was important to show a presence in Simcoe, a community where one of the largest numbers of people

It is estimated that those working as migrant workers pay approximately 3.4 million dollars into the El system each year- now without the ability to access its parental benefits.

come to work as migrant farm workers. Finley has to therefore be fully aware of the experiences of these individuals who live and work in her region, and how this decision would impact their lives, showing her clear disregard for migrant members of her community.

Coming together to form a coalition of allied activists and community members, this group organized a delegation trip to Finley's constituency office in Simcoe Ontario at 76 Kent Street South. The group arrived at the office with various signs, a large hand painted petition and a banner, all calling for the return and expansion of EI benefits for migrant workers. Prior to the action, media was provided with a press release, and as we arrived, representatives from local media, and media from Hamilton were waiting. As soon as we arrived at the office the administration worker locked the door, put up an "out to lunch sign," and called the police. However, the delegation, decided to stay until someone returned. We waved our signs and banners and spoke to the media. About 20 minutes after our arrival, the Simcoe police arrived and entered the building. As we realized there were people inside we began to chant that we be let in. The media was told they had to stay outside. Each individual involved was let into the building and given the opportunity to

voice their anger and frustration against Finley's decision. The group as a whole demanded a meeting with Finley, and the administration staff stated she would send Finley all our statements and demands.

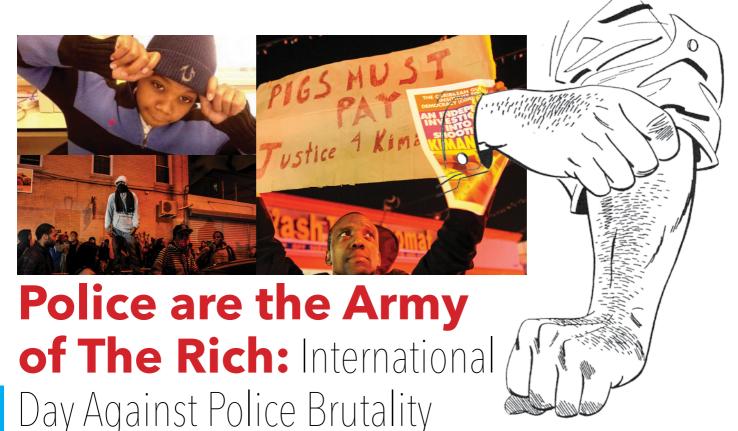
We assured the secretary that this was just the first action we will plan; if we did not hear back from Finley we would be back with more people; and that petition we made would be circulated among her constituency members and other communities. We also talked to the admin worker about her calling the police. We spoke to the fact that individuals should be free to bring their concerns forward to government representatives, and that calling police is not an appropriate response. She noted that she was worried when she saw us, and that it was her office's policy to call police. Though the conversation about the police ended there, it was discussed further among the group of allies during our debrief. Decisions like Finley's are acts of disrespect, injustice and violence against people working under migrant worker programs, in the sense that they will have seriously negative ramifications on those people's lives. It's messed up that these decisions are passed without a blink, and when people come together to voice their opposition the police are called. There was recognition that though many of us see the police as an unjust, violent and oppressive

institution, calling the police may be the only tool the administration worker to date has to address moments when she feels threatened; however, instating it as an office policy should be critiqued and challenged.

We left the office and spent the rest of the day gathering signatures for our petition from local residents in downtown Simcoe. A lot of people were quite receptive to us, however as members of our group who live here note, many residents continue to exclude migrant members of the community and though some have been living and working in the area for more than thirty years, they continue to ignore migrants, and are often defensive when they migrating people and allies raise their concerns. Racism, xenophobia and the dominance of the white farmer narrative are deeply ingrained in this and many places where folks arrive under temporary and seasonal work programs.

This action was an ally-organized action, and as those working as migrant workers begin to return to Canada in the next few months, they will take the lead in our organizing. Due to their lack of employment security and precarious immigration status, those working as migrant works take serious risks when they speak out. Many folks come up with strategies to protect themselves while they voice their concerns. A great example of this is the work done by Justicia for Migrant Workers, who facilitated sessions where workers wrote their thoughts about the EI cuts on posters, and posed for photographs with their faces obscured. It is important to recognize that our friends, in the migrant worker community can definitely speak for themselves.

Fuerza/Puwersa invites more people to connect with us, as migrant organizing will continue throughout the spring and summer. Please contact FuerzaPuwersa@gmail.com  $\triangle$ 



Every year on March 15<sup>th</sup>, confrontational demonstrations are called to oppose police violence and impunity everywhere. By Bryan Hill

#### BROOKLYN, NY: POLICE MURDER 16 YEAR-OLD KID

On Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Sergeant Mourad Mourad and Officer Jovaniel Cordova murdered 16-year-old Kimani Gray in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. The police stopped Kimani in an arbitrary detention on the street, known in Brooklyn as a stop-and-frisk. The officers, who claim he had a gun, shot him seven times. Kimani died en route to the hospital.

New York City Mayor Bloomberg instituted the stop-and-frisk policy which gives police the ability to search anyone on the street suspected of criminal activity. The policy has been ruled unconstitutional in courts, but continues as appeals head to higher courts. These extended powers have allowed the police to further criminalize and harass people of colour in New York, and police shooting spurred by stop-and-frisks have skyrocketed.

#### Response in the Streets

On March  $11^{\rm th}$  300 people arrived for the vigil. Afterwards, participants marched down Church St. A food market was broken into and looted for money and

groceries. A crowd looted the Rite-Aid pharmacy; breaking the windows, they took food, goods and cash out of the register. Bus windows were smashed as well.

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, a small group gathered for a vigil in pouring rain at the same location.

On March 13th after a witness came forward asserting Kimani was unarmed and the release of the autopsy reports, a confrontational demo was held. Glass bottles were thrown at police, and a squad car had its windows broken. Fifty people were arrested and one cop was sent to hospital after being hit in the head with a brick.

During these consecutive demonstrations, the NYPD instituted a Frozen Zone in Flatbush, which blocks media access and institutes a form of martial law.

## MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2013: 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

Every year on March 15<sup>th</sup>, confrontational demonstrations are called to oppose police violence and impunity everywhere. As long as there are police,

they serve the interests of the rich and will be given exemptions from their laws. They will rain down violence and death towards anyone who steps out of line. We are forced to put up with their harassment and high-school style bullying in our interactions with them.

March 15<sup>th</sup> has become the day where all those who feel powerless when alone with the police and constantly dogged by their harassment can feel the power and release of seeing a line of police run. March 15<sup>th</sup>s of years past have seen cop cars burnt, police stations attacked and street battles with the police. It is through collective street action that for one day only, the police can see what life would be like if the scales were slightly more even. Here is an update on some of the demonstrations against the police on March 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### PORTLAND, OREGON

A demo of seventy-five people roamed the streets of Portland, Oregon. Meeting in Holladay Park, the march wove through the streets, with a large police presence. Chants included "Police are

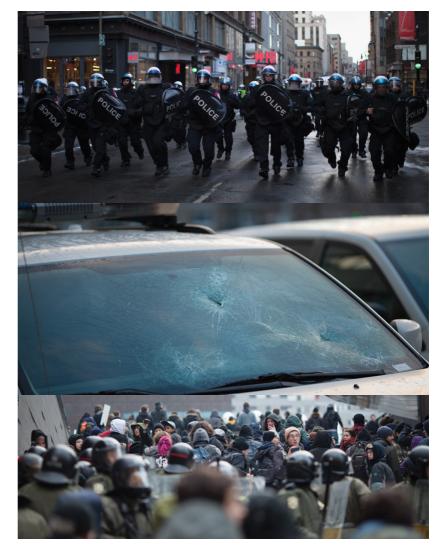
#### OPPOSITE PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

1 Kimani Gray was shot and killed by police, 2 Sign during demonstration on March 13<sup>th</sup> in Flatbush, 3 Demonstrators confront police in the evening of March 13<sup>th</sup> Photos by Stemphanie Keith

#### **RIGHT FROM TOP 1**

Police charge during March 15<sup>th</sup> in Montrèal, 2 Police cruiser after it was attacked by Demonstrators in Montrèal, 3 Demonstrators run from riot police downtown Montrèal Photos by Thien V







This is the first time that a March 15<sup>th</sup> antipolice demonstration has been organized in Portland.

the army of rich", "Portland, Cairo, Greece,

Fuck the Police", "Fuck these cops we don't

need them, what we want is total freedom."

COP CAR BURNED -MONTRÈAL, MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>

Reprinted from Anarchistnews.org In the spirit of March 15's past, a cop car was set on fire on the evening of March 15th, at the Poste 33 police station in Parc-Ex, Montrèal. This action was taken to complement the 17th annual demonstration against police (and their brutality) that took place earlier that day.

We also send a message of support to Marco Camenisch in his struggles from inside prison in Switzerland.

#### MONTRÈAL, QUÈBEC

With 15-year history of violence and street battles, the demonstration called in Montreal was declared illegal 15 minutes after it began outside of police headquarters. Police surrounded the demo in an attempt to kettle it. The demo began to move as riot police hidden in parking garages and the Mètro bust out and split the demonstration into a number of smaller crowds which played cat and mouse with the police, smashing the windows of a police cruiser and some store windows. Four demonstrators were injured and two police officers hospitalized, one after receiving a kick to the face. 297

people were arrested and twelve people were charged with Assaulting a Police Officer, Possession of Incendiary Devices and Mischief.

Later that night, a police car was set on fire (see sidebar).

#### OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

In the Evening of March 15<sup>th</sup> a demonstration of forty people marched through Oakland towards the Oakland Police Departments Station. After a confrontation with ten riot police, the demo left the police station, spraypainting "FTP"(Fuck The Police) on the side of a Chase Bank, whose windows were also broken. The Oakland Tribune had its windows broken and a number of ATMs were vandalized. Windows were also broken at the Bank of California & Union Bank. There were no arrests that night. △

## There is No Justice at Grand Valley

The death of a former Grand Valley Institute prisoner systems sparks outrage at the ongoing abuse of women in Canada's prison-industrial complex. By Tammy Lee

N THE EARLY EVENING OF JANUARY 28<sup>th</sup>, protesters gathered outside of the Grand Valley Institution for Women (GVI), a federal prison in Kitchener, ON. Approximately thirty people came out to show their support for the women inside, and to draw attention to the ongoing abuse at the institution, which in recent months has garnered substantial media attention in the wake of a drugs-for-sex scandal.

A little over a week before the protest, Kinew James was found unresponsive in her cell at a psychiatric prison in Saskatoon, and later died in hospital of an apparent heart attack. Kinew, 35, had been serving a fifteen year sentence, and was set to be released this August. Fellow inmates had heard Kinew shouting for help from her cell, and repeatedly pushing the distress call alarm. Despite the calls for help, guards ignored the alarm and allowed over an hour to pass before responding with the health care unit. A prompt response to the distress alarm could have been the difference between life and death for Kinew. Her family, as well as several prisoner rights advocate groups are demanding an inquiry into her death.

Observers have been quick to draw parallels between the experiences of Kinew James and that of Ashley Smith. Both Kinew and Ashley had histories of struggling with mental illness and self-harm, had their sentences extended for charges incurred while in prison, were routinely placed in solitary confinement, and died while incarcerated. In 2007 Ashley who was 19 years old and an inmate at Grand Valley Institution, died of asphyxiation after tying a cloth around her neck as guards watched, but did not intervene. An inquest into her death is ongoing, and continues to reveal exceedingly disturbing facts about the practices and conditions at Grand Valley.

Kinew up until only a few months ago was also an inmate at GVI, but was transferred to Saskatoon after coming forward with allegations that a guard in the institution was exchanging drugs and cigarettes for sex with inmates. Kinew was not the only person to make such an accusation. According to Kim Pate, executive director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, at least three other women had made similar claims. These allegations hit the media in early November, and the guard in question (a relative of a senior manager at the prison) was suspended, and an internal investigation launched.

Only days after the death of Kinew, the findings of the investigation were released. The Correctional Service of Canada and the Waterloo Regional Police announced that their investigation had concluded that the drugs-for-sex accusations were unfounded. Several outside groups raised concerns throughout the investigation that evidence would be difficult to gather due to the fact that inmates, having no protection from the potential reprisals of guards are too afraid to speak up of abuse and offer testimony. This concern was dismissed by investigators who claimed that it had no basis. The accused guard, who had been suspended with pay, has since returned to work and the investigation closed.

To say that GVI and the prison system in general failed both Ashley Smith and Kinew James would be a massive understatement. However, to view their tragic stories as exceptional would also be a mistake – their experiences are not an exception to the rule, but rather the brutal norm of a system that fails all incarcerated women. No internal investigation or inquiry will address this. The formal complaint mechanisms of guards investigating guards, of police investigating prisons, will never favour these women.

There is no justice, and there is no accountability at Grand Valley. Isolation, deprivation, abuse, and sexual exploitation are inherent to the violent institution  $\Delta$ .

# Repression News Briefs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

By Bryan Hill (Guelph Anarchist Black Cross)

#### **JANUARY 3RD**

Chile: José Miguel Sanchez (52 years) was transferred from the High Security Prison to Colina II Prison. José was beaten upon arrival and put into the punishment section. José is serving a 20 year sentence for armed revolutionary activity against the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

#### JANUARY 11TH

Toronto, ON: Eva Botten, from Vancouver, was found guilty of six counts of mischief over 5000 dollars and one count of disguised with intent. Charges stem from the black bloc action that occurred during the G20 Summit in Toronto in June 2010. Eva's sentencing hearing is set for March 28th, 2013.

**Brooklyn, NY:** Hacker Aaron Swartz, who started RSS feeds, and Reddit, and worked on a number of internet social projects, committed suicide. Aaron was facing criminal charges for downloading millions of copyrighted academic articles and publishing them to the internet. The added stress of these charges contributed to his death.

#### JANUARY 12TH

Penetanguishene, ON: Four units at the Central North Correctional Centre participated in a lock-down refusal to protest the loss of a half hour at the end of every day on the range. Fifty to sixty guards stormed the range, beat and handcuffed one prisoner. Alex Hundert, a prisoner in on G20 related charges, was placed in segregation for 6 days after the incident. After 6 days in the hole, Alex was sent back to the hole, this time for being a security threat to the prison. He spent a total of 5 weeks in the hole.

#### **JANUARY 17<sup>™</sup>, 2013**

**Santiago, Chile:** Camilo Valdes Mateluna was sentenced to 5 years plus a day in prison for throwing a molotov cocktail at

a police van during the commemoration of the Day of the Youth Combatant on March 29th, 2012. For more info on the day of the youth combatant, check out this free film online called the Chicago Conspiracy. crimethinc.com/movies/chicago.html

#### **JANUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>**

Santiago, Chile: Sebastián Fajardo was convicted of burning a bus during the fourth memorial march for Matías Catrileo, who was shot dead during an action to return private land to the indigenous Mapuche territory. Sebastián was sentenced to 3 years strict probation. Eduardo, Sebastián's co-accused, was acquitted of all charges.

#### **JANUARY 28TH**

Penetanguishene, ON: David Cedeño, a Prisoner in the Central North Correctional Centre ended his 20 day hunger strike to protest racist harassment by prison officers and being held in segregation for 6 months, as well as to obtain access to educational programming and adequate health treatment. More info: facebook. com/SupportDavidCedeno

#### **FEBRUARY 1**ST

Seattle, Washington: Grand Jury Resister, Maddy Pfeiffer, has remained in an isolation unit for a month now after being imprisoned for not testifying before the Grand Jury convened to investigate the May 1st demonstration in Seattle. They have been denied contact with their lawyer since being incarcerated as well.

Italy: Anarchist prisoners Alfredo Caspito and Sergio Maria Stefani began hunger strike after being denied visits from their partners. Alfredo is being held on charges of wounding a nuclear company manager in Genoa in May 2012. Sergio was arrested in a series of international raids

so-called 'Operation Boldness' in connection with the underground anarchist group Informal Anarchist Federation (FAI).

#### **FEBRUARY 4TH**

St. Petersburg, Russia: An anarchist squat in an abandoned railway station was raided by the police. When security guards tried to open a hole in the wall to extract squatters, a fight broke out. The police were called and barricades were erected, nineteen squatters were arrested with a few hospitalized for concussions. Most received fines but three face charges for assaulting police officers, who lost teeth and received a fractured skull during the confrontation.

#### **FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

Santiago, Chile: Carla Verdugo and Iván Silva were released to house arrest in the lead up to their trial. Carla and Iván were arrested on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 carrying parts of an unarmed homemade bomb. The prosecution is looking for 5 year sentences from each of them.

Breiva Prison, Chile: Noelia Cotelo Riveiro called for solidarity with life threatening conditions in prison. She has been handcuffed in her cell for days after being beaten by prison guards, and in danger of going into a hypoglycemic coma. Noelia has experienced beatings, torture, sexual assault and denial of privileges since a confrontation with the guards, which left her with a broken hand four months earlier.

#### **FEBRUARY 9TH**

Montrèal, Qc: 36 people arrested during a demonstration against Plan Nord, northern Quebec's energy development plan, threatening the environment and Indigenous peoples. Windows were smashed and a flare was shot into building. Thirty-two face charges of unlawful assembly, four face charges for assaulting police.

#### FEBRUARY 13<sup>™</sup>

Oakland Cali.: Anarchist punk house 'the music box' was raided by police in connection with a murder investigation related to a previous resident of the house who is currently incarcerated.

Bulgaria: Anti-Fascist prisoner Jock Palfreeman ended a thirty day hunger strike to regain access to his study courses. Jock is the chairman for the Bulgariuan Prisoner's Association and after losing 20 Kilograms and getting a formal denial of his studies from the prison administration, he will continue his struggle in the courts.

#### FEBRUARY 14TH

New York City: Joel Bitar was arrested and charged with twenty-six charges related to the black bloc actions in Toronto during the G20 summit in June 2010. Most of his charges steam from allegedly using a pick-axe to break windows causing over 400,000 dollars. He is charges include mischief over 5000 dollars, assaulting an officer andmasking with intent. He has choosen to challenge his extradition to Canada and was released on a 500,000 dollars bond to house arrest. More Info: supportjoel.com

#### FEBRUARY 15<sup>™</sup>

Attawapiskat Territory: Injunction launched against Attawapiskat blockaders, threatening criminal charges if they continued to block the road access to De Beers goldmine on their territory. Blockades continue.

#### FEBRUARY 18<sup>™</sup>

New reports bring the number of documented aboringinal deaths to 3000 at the hands of the Canadian state who were held in Government residential schools. These schools were used to steal children and rob them of their culture and traditions. Residential Schools in Canada starting in 1910 and the last federal institution was closed in 1996.

#### FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>

Tucson, AZ: Dane Ross was arrested by Federal Marshalls on four charges related to the G20 Summit in Toronto in 2010. Dane is currently incarcerated and facing an extradition hearing to be tried in Canada. For more info: supportdanerossman.blogspot.com

#### MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>

Mexico: two weeks of solidarity with Felicity Ann Ryder, an anarchist on the run for the past seven months. Felicity is accused of setting a failed explosive with Mario "Tripa" López who was injured when the explosive detonated. Solidarity has been called for to break the isolation that living clandestinely has created in her life.

#### FEBRUARY 22ND

Spain: Anarchist prisoner Gabriel Pombo Da Silva has been transferred again to a new FIES module, which is a A super-high security designation in Spain. This most recent move will keep him further from his family and friends, as an effort to further punish this rebellious prisoner. Check out some of his writings translated to English: Until We Are All Free zinelibrary.info/gabriel-pombo-da-silva-until-weare-all-free

#### FEBRUARY 25<sup>™</sup>

Memphis, Tenn,: Fugitive summons have been issued for U.S Black Anarchist, Lorenzo Komboa Ervin. The summons are related to unpaid court costs in relation to a 12-year old misdemeanor conviction. These summons come at a political climate of anti-police and anti-klan demonstrations Lorenzo has helped organize.

#### FEBRUARY 26<sup>™</sup>

Angola, La: Albert Woodfox of the Angola 3 had his conviction overturned for the third time by the district court. forty years ago Albert and two others were framed with murders after successfully organizing a series of hunger and work strikes within the Angola prison to expose the continued segregation within the prison, America's largest prison, formerly an 18,000 acre slave plantation.

#### FEBRUARY 28<sup>™</sup>

Milton, ON: Kelly Pflug-Back was released from prison. Kelly was sentenced to fifteen months in prison, charged with six counts of mischief over 5000 dollars and one charge of masking with intent. Free up Kelly.

New York City: Rebel Diaz Arts Collective (RDACBX) in South Bronx was raided by federal marshals and the NYPD. RDACBX is a social centre and was trying to negotiate a new lease agreement with their landlord when the raid occurred.

USA: Breanna (Bradley) Manning plead guilty to ten of the twenty-two charges facing her. Breanna is responsible for the largest leak of classified documents in American History. The documents which were given to Wikileaks, exposed a number of actions the US Army took part in and includeding a video innocent civilians being killed.

Cleveland, Ohio: Day of action for Joshua "Skelly" Stafford of the Cleveland 4. Call in campaign to the prison he is held in to increase his food intake in prison to match his medical needs. Skelly was arrested last year as a part of an FBI entrapment operation. More info: cleveland4solidarity.org

#### MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>

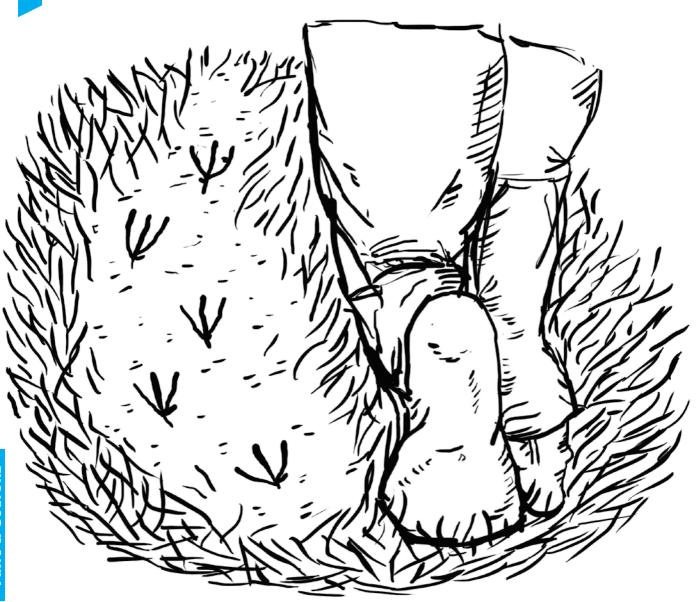
Seattle, Washington: Grand Jury resisters Matt Duran and Kateeo Olejnik were released from prison after five months, two of which were in segregation. They were held without charge or conviction for refusing to testify at a grand jury investigation into black bloc actions during the May 1st demonstrations last year in Seattle. Maddy Pfeiffer remains in custody but has been transferred out of isolation. More Info: saynothing.noblogs.org and nopoliticalrepression.wordpress.com

#### MARCH 15<sup>™</sup>

Montreal, QC: 297 people were arrested during the  $17^{th}$  Annual Day Against police Brutality demo. The majority received 640 dollars fines. Twenty-Two people were charged with a variety offenses, including, mischief, assaulting a police officer and possession of indendiary devices.  $\Delta$ 

## Websites to check out for the full stories and current updates:

WARRIORPUBLICATIONS.WORD-PRESS.COM
GUELPHABC.NOBLOGS.ORG/
WEB.RESIST.
CA/~VANCOUVERG20SUPPORT/
DENVERABC.WORDPRESS.COM/
SAYNOTHING.NOBLOGS.ORG/
NOPOLITICALREPRESSION.WORDPRESS.COM/
WARONSOCIETY.NOBLOGS.ORG/
325.NOSTATE.NET/
SABOTAGEMEDIA.ANARKHIA.ORG/
PUGETSOUNDANARCHISTS.ORG/
SUBMEDIA.TV/



### The Memory of Soil: Wonderings from the Guelph Tracking Club

By James Nowak

It is the roots from all the trees that have died out here, that's how you can walk safely over the soft places. "Across The Swamp"-Olav Hauge, translated from Norwegian by Robert Bly

TRACKING CLUB, WE GET DOWN ON our hands and knees and stare at the mud, leaves and dirt; in short, the ground. In many ways, tracking is a sort of love affair with all things de la terre and requires, at times, nothing short of utter reverence for this magnificent earth we walk upon. The famous tracker, Jon Young, likes to point out how it's no coincidence that the word "humility" comes from the Latin word "humus", meaning soil. I can't tell you how many times I've knelt down beside a set of tracks, absolutely convinced I knew their story, only to be humbled by a few unanswerable questions from a friend. The art of tracking, when deeply pursued, asks that we approach the ground beneath us the same way we might approach a revered elder, quietly and with humility.

And maybe this comparison isn't so far from the truth. Last month my seventy nine year old great aunt died in

a Brampton hospital. A few days later, at her funeral, I touched her hands as she lay in her open casket. They felt cold like the ground does when you sleep outside without a mat. This comparison seemed somewhat misplaced until later that day when I watched her casket get lowered into her grave.

I remembered how in the last year of her life my aunt and I worked together to compile our family tree. Although I couldn't articulate it at the time, it seemed odd how we put the youngest people at the bottom and the oldest at the top. Standing there at her gravesite, it suddenly made sense why it had: we'd drawn our tree upside down. The dead are not little twigs or leaves at the tops of branches, they are the roots that hold the soil together, cold and dark, feeding life from a place we cannot see.

I wasn't born into a culture that knows how to pay tribute to its dead. I've

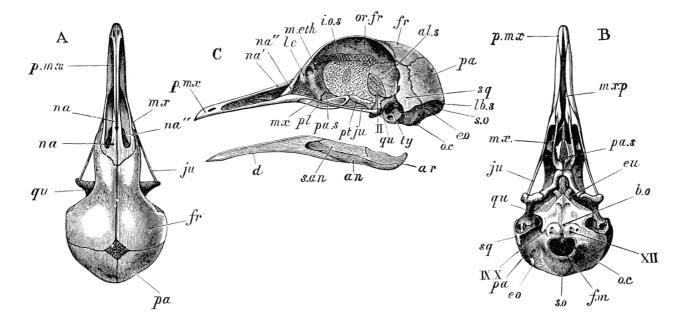
never heard the old stories, rituals, myths and songs of the people I came from. But the same thing always happens when I sit alone by the river or go tracking with a few friends, and I know it happens to them as well: we remember something about being human that we didn't know before. Could it be that those who lived and died before us are quietly speaking, trying to tell us something we need to know in a language of footprints and birdsong?

Please come to our next tracking club. Your willingness to try and remember the stories written on the earth is a deeply needed medicine in these times of great peril and uncertainty. It doesn't matter if you know nothing about tracking; the truth is, most of us don't really know much either. We just don't let that stop us.

The Guelph Tracking Club meets every month. E-mail guelphnaturefolklore@gmail.com to find out when and where.  $\triangle$ 







**▼**HE PASSENGER PIGEON ONCE NUMbered in the billions from Hudson's Bay in the North to the Gulf of Mexico in the South, East to the Atlantic Ocean West to the Rocky Mountains. At their peak, they made up forty percent of the entire bird population of Turtle Island/North America, five billion birds. The only other creature that outnumbered them were locusts. In the late summer and fall, they followed the ripening acorns and nuts of the great Eastern hardwood forests in mile-wide flocks that would darken the sky for days on end. They flew gracefully and quickly with their powerful wings and streamlined bodies.

"I rode through it upwards of forty miles, and, crossing it in different parts, found its average breadth to be rather more than three miles...

... It was a scene of uproar and confusion. I found it quite useless to speak, or even to shout to those persons who were nearest to me. Even the reports of the guns were seldom heard, and I was made aware of the firing only by seeing the shooters reloading...

... Many trees two feet in diameter, I observed, were broken off at no great distance from the ground; and the branches of many of the largest and tallest had given way, as if the forest had been swept by a tornado. Every thing proved to me that the number of birds resorting to this

part of the forest must be immense beyond conception."

-John James Audubon, recounting his experience at a hunting camp amongst millions of roosting passenger pigeons.

Passenger pigeons once bred in the southern Great Lakes region, even right here in Wellington County. Each female would lay just a single egg in a small, rough nest of twigs. A single nesting area in Wisconsin once covered 2200 square kilometres, an area nearly the size of Wellington County! Passenger pigeons would crowd the branches of trees, often making them break under their weight. Two or three inches of white guano would cover the forest floor below, making it look like winter. When the young hatched, parents would feed them "pigeon milk", a regurgitated slop similar to what mourning doves feed their young.

For unknown generations, foxes, eagles, bears, wolves, coyotes, vultures, crows, and opossums likewise would congregate in these great forests to feed on the young birds that had fallen from the trees and lay maimed on the ground. Many native peoples hunted the passenger pigeon with nets and smoked and dried their bodies for winter food.

When Europeans came here, they quickly began to hunt the passenger pigeons for food. It was literally a "two birds with one stone" situation. Accounts tell of single gunshots begetting the plummeting

bodies of forty birds. Some people made a living simply by gathering the crippled birds that had fallen from their roosts, wringing their necks and arranging them into piles for sale at game markets.

As colonial expansion increased, so too did the demand for cheap flesh, and a more concerted effort was made to hunt passenger pigeons. Single days saw hundreds of thousands of birds killed. Millions upon millions of them were sent to cities like Toronto, Kingston, Boston and New York, and entire rail lines were created to meet the demand.

Why do we do the things we do? I just don't know if I can hold it anymore. My heart is chapped and when it cracks it bleeds

but I just don't know what else to do.

You used to darken the sky for days on end but I swear it's darker now that you're gone. I know that you'll never be comin' back but I promise I won't stop hurtin' for you.

In the late 1800s some laws were passed in an attempt to protect the diminishing numbers of passenger pigeons.however like many conservation laws today, they were inadequate, scarcely followed and seldom enforced. The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw dwindling numbers of passenger pigeons until soon they were becoming very rare.

"In 1871, the indiscriminate shooting of passenger pigeons for sport and for selling on the market was still legal and socially accepted. Freight cars full of passenger pigeons once rolled through Mimico-the 'resting place of wild pigeons'-on their way to New York City and other major American cities to be sold again. They could also be purchased in local markets in southern Ontario. Legislation to protect them was not passed until 1879, when they were virtually extinct in the wild." -Toronto Historical Archives

Unfortunately, this story does not end with a desperate plea to give some money to a charity, adopt a highway, build a bird box, send a letter, or something that might make one feel like they could do something to help the passenger pigeon. That's because it's just too late. By the start of the last century only fourteen were left alive, being kept in confinement. In 1914, the last one, who was named Martha by her keepers, died alone in a small cage at the Cincinnati zoo. She had never tasted the wild skies like her ancestors had only a few generations ago.

Around 1895, Thomas Townsend, while exploring with his young son, Clarence, one spring in the woods near Kingston, found a wild passenger pigeon's

nest containing a viable egg. Father and son left the nest untouched and the same day informed local authorities who returned the next day, only to find the nest invaded, by a weasel most likely, and the egg destroyed. No passenger pigeons were ever seen in the wild again.

Sometimes I wish they would've set her free. At least then we could hold onto the belief that she was still out there. Maybe she would've found a mate, maybe just maybe she would've laid an egg. Apparently near the end even the wild passenger pigeon stopped mating with each other. Maybe they just knew. But when Martha died behind iron bars at the Cincinnati zoo, so too did all the maybes.

Even her last breath, her death, and the extinction of her species had to be domesticated; had to be controlled, witnessed.

The forests of this area will never see another branch fall to the ground under the weight of passenger pigeons. The leaf litter will never again be covered in their white guano inches deep. The sky will never again be darkened by their bodies as far as the eye can see.

Sometimes it's just too late. The guns were like prayers shot into the sky, you seemed to answer them when you hit the ground.

I rung your neck with my callused hands and I plucked the color from your beautiful. What's it like to fall from the flock and spiral towards earth like a maple key? What's it like to be packed on a train, the smoke and iron taking you away?

While it's too late to bring back the passenger pigeon, I wonder what it's not too late for. I often think of my ancestors these days. Some of them lived in and around the Kingston area from the early 1800s onwards. They were simple people, colonial farmers. They lived in log homes they built themselves. Some of them couldn't read or write, and probably didn't care to learn. Didn't need to. I imagine they were hunting and eating the ancestors of Martha. Keep themselves going on passenger pigeon meat and stolen native land.

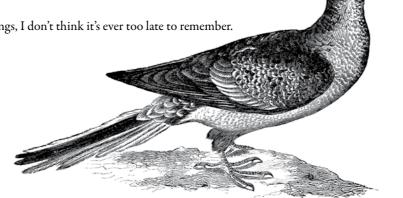
Why do I bring this up? Well, 'cause I'm only here because the people that came before me did what they had to do to keep going. Simply put, there's passenger pigeon meat in my blood. In the same way, there's stolen native land, genocide, poisoned rivers, piled scalps, drained wetlands, fallen forests- you name it, it's there. Likewise, I've got ancestors who were rapists, murderers and pedophiles. This is where I come from. It's not a pride thing, it's not a shame thing, just where I come from.

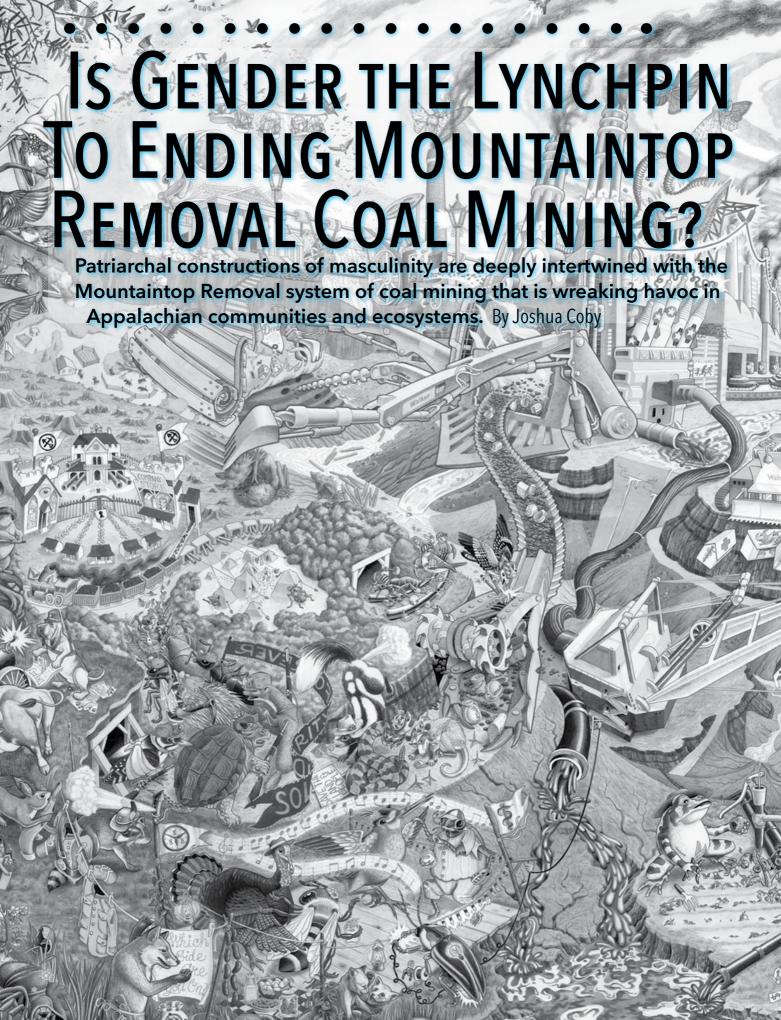
I've heard people talk about the future how can we really know our impact in generations have affected our lives but I think we owe it to the old ones, the and the ones gone forever like the don't go forgotten, to remember them.

seven generations for years now. But less we've seen how the last seven today. This is not a pretty road to travel, ones yet to come, to the ones here now passenger pigeon to make sure they

So, while it might be too late for some things, I don't think it's ever too late to remember.

Here's to the passenger pigeon. Longing for you wherever you are.  $\triangle$ 







THE CENTRAL APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN RANGE, COMPOSing parts of Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia and Tennessee, is home to the most biodiverse temperate rainforests in the world. The mountain-folk who inhabit the valleys or "holler" communities of Central Appalachia are known stereotypically as being fiercely independent, poor, in support of small government, self-sufficient, hardworking, "the best moonshiners in America," and of course for their historical relationship with coal extraction. A modern form of coal mining is expanding in the Central Appalachians, particularly in Kentucky and West Virginia, a practice known as mountaintop removal (MTR). Mining corporations use explosives to expose coal deposits that lay under the surface of a mountain, and then use up to twenty story draglines to process the coal from rock. While flattening mountains, MTR also takes the miner out of mining: For instance, the miners' workforce has dropped from over 50,000 workers in West Virginia in the 1950s to 15,000 today. Despite its obvious dangers and generally lower life expectancies, coal mining is one of the most coveted jobs in poor Southern West Virginia, and Southeastern Kentucky, because mine work is one of the only ways to escape poverty in the mineral rich, poverty-stricken region. With the exception of a select few women miners in the Appalachians, mining has been entirely dominated by men. While men have frequently died working the mines, from accidents and black-lung disease; there are far more people who have mining-related illnesses just by their proximity to mining operations.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is women who care for sick relatives, who nurse their children with toxic milk and who have to use contaminated water from their water supply to feed their families and bathe their children. Mining is the domain of dominant masculinity in the Appalachians, characteristics of fierce independence, a breadwinner mentality, burly

strength, and fierce patriotism. It is no wonder that people who do not fit squarely into this identity formulation, namely women and queer people are leading the local struggle against the dirtiest energy source on the planet in their own backyards. Understanding the formulation of class and gender identity in the Appalachians may be the lynchpin of winning the struggle against mountaintop removal mining.

Coal is synonymous with the Appalachians and has played a historically significant role in most central Appalachian people's lives since the construction of the railroads through Kentucky and West Virginia in the 1880s. Coal mining in the Appalachian's account for over 30% of all American coal production and is expanding rapidly. The first step in the process of MTR is deforestation, followed by the explosive removal of up to 800 feet of the mountain. The coal industry in the Appalachians uses millions of pounds of explosives per year, it outbuys the American military in explosives even in wartime. People live in the valleys below, and experience near constant explosions day and night, ruining the foundations of their houses and cracking their well linings, often turning their water supply black with unregulated coal waste. After the explosions, the rock is pushed into the valleys or hollows below. To date, half of the Central Appalachian Mountains have been flattened and the overburden waste rock has filled over 1,200 miles of headwaters and streams. The coal is then extracted from the rock and cleaned on site in chemical-laden slurry ponds, which can hold up to 1.7 billion gallons of toxic waste. To understand what this looks like for the people who often live below the slurry ponds, one could turn to the history of the Buffalo Creek disaster in 1972, where a dam holding 132 million gallons of coal slurry burst, wiping out the town of Buffalo Creek, and killing 125. Sadly this is not one of the largest coal slurry spills. In 2000, in Martin County, a collapsed dam dumped

(Butler & Wuerthner, 2009:3)

Black-lung is the common name for coal workers' pneumoconiosis (CWP), a condition where coal dust builds up in the lungs.

255 million gallons into the Tug River, creating a spill thirty times the size of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. This spill was only exceeded in 2008 by the Kingston, Tennessee coal slurry spill releasing 1.1 billion gallons of coal ash slurry and unknown chemicals into the surrounding waterways and making 25-foot slurry walls over a mile from the spill site. One could also watch the recent documentary on Coal River, which depicts the residents of Coal River, West Virginia's fight against Massey Energy and the State of West Virginia to have an elementary school (where most students have respiratory problems) moved from underneath a 1.2 billion gallon slurry pond.<sup>3</sup>

There are serious health issues faced by the residents of communities where MTR is practiced; Central Appalachia's MTR communities suffer the highest cancer rates in the United States. A recent medical study found an additional 60,000 cases of people living with various cancers in mountaintop removal areas of West Virginia when traditional "cancer risks" were controlled for.4 Childhood leukemia, metal poisoning, respiratory diseases, and eroded stomach linings are some of the other epidemics associated with mountaintop removal areas. The way in which health is gendered in American culture, in relation to caregiving, represents a point of divergence between pro and anti-MTR positions in the struggles to end MTR. The continued epidemic devastation of the people of these communities is largely being decried by activist women like the late Judy Bonds, who have been publicly speaking about the environmental injustice and health. The traditional roles women bear responsibility for in the household, around familial health, child-rearing, cooking, bathing and cleaning are all aggravated by MTR practices in these communities. It is women who on a daily basis are providing care for sick relatives, and deciding whether to use potentially contaminated water in a family meal.

The fact that MTR is still popular in these communities is largely the result of an alliance between some men defending their dominant masculinities and sources of income and mining corporations, media and government interests, who ply people with coal advertising and a spectrum of misinformation on a daily basis. The pro-MTR debate does not just include miners and potential miners in the workforce, although they are an important archetype. The ideological importance of identifying with a mining cultural history and family lineage, the social importance and economic value of securing a lucrative mining job in a depressed economy, all play into the support for MTR. Because the pro MTR position associates the Anti-MTR position, not just with an end to coal mining, but an end to the salient archetype of the miner, and thus a literal way of life.

Hidden in the recesses of the academy, there is research being done on group dynamics, social psychology, around gender formulation, on why people

unconsciously or consciously identify with cultural norms, and ways of acting. It is these academic secrets, which will allow us to interpret why people identify with destructive environmental practices which foul their own nests. More specifically, we can use advancements in psychological and social research to explain the formation of the pro and anti- MTR debate and how they are centrally connected to the identities people create.

The mountains from which the Appalachian communities spring forth, plays a major role in the identity creation of modern day coal miners. Identity in relation to the environment can be analyzed on a micro-sociological level using Gary Fine's Naturework. As defined by Fine, Naturework is the way we process nature into culture filtered through shared social meaning.<sup>7</sup> It is the way culture shapes the way we look at the environment around us - the things we see and don't see when we look at a tree, for instance, or a beer can on the side of the road. Naturework argues that we create the meaning and understanding of the raw materials around us by defining and sharing understandings of the material reality we interact with. To a resident of a coal mining town in Appalachia, the mountain they live beneath could represent many simultaneous and contradictory associations: a place for hunting, gathering and food security; a source of income from mining; food and economic security through work, pollution, danger, explosions, and machinery; control over 'nature'; or just 'nature' itself. It is the dominance of certain shared understandings of our environment which represent the borders, labels and appropriateness of our interactions with the environment. In the case of mountaintop removal in the Appalachians this Naturework has two dominant divergent lenses for understanding the local environment represented in the pro and anti-MTR positions. Instead of entrenching in the Naturework of the anti-MTR position, to win a struggle against MTR, it may be necessary to better relate to the pro-MTR Naturework as to communicate with the pro-MTR support base.

Cognitive Dissonance, introduced by *Leon* Festinger in 1957, dictates that when faced with a decision in which an individual holds conflicting ideas, beliefs or values, people often experience anxiety and the necessity of rationalization as a part of the self-image maintenance process.8 The tendency of cognitive dissonance as a psychological reaction to anxiety exposed by conflict is both universal and culturally specific in its articulations. For the mountaintop removal coal miner in the Appalachians who experience daily the lived contradictions in their labour activities, around concepts of health, family well-being, selfpreservation, security, and environmental stewardship, dissonance may be a strong factor in the maintenance of a pro-mountaintop removal identity. Examining research around the exposure of cognitive dissonance in identity formulation may be the lynchpin in a more

On Coal River, 2010.
Oncoalriver.com
(Hendyx et al.:2012:
325)
(Butler & Wuerthner,
2009:65, 66,85,105)
(Cavenaugh, and
Wood, 2010: 10:3116:50, 23:05-28:30)
7(Capek, 2008:13).

(Chapanis and Chapanis, 1964, 2) (Hoshino-Browne et. al, 2005, 295)



(Chapanis and Chapanis, 1964, 2)
(Hoshino-Browne et. al, 2005, 295)
(Moore, 2005: 753)

effective anti-mountaintop removal discourse with people entrenched in the pro-mountaintop removal position. The ways an individual can embody simultaneously divergent positions represent a "double consciousness," first articulated by W.E.B Du Bois in his analysis of being both African and American at the turn of the 20th century. 10 For the stereotypically poor coal-town resident, the mountains may represent simultaneous economic security, and health insecurity, or, put another way, both a place to maintain hunting and gathering autonomy and a place to provide food through labor which diminishes their autonomous food security capacities. Du Bois argues that the African-American individual is deprived of a true selfconsciousness, because they most often see themselves in the reflection of another view. 11 This double identity of both insider and outsider creates a mental tension in individuals and reveals a disadvantaged social position. If double-consciousness were applied to the inhabitants of communities where mountaintop removal is practiced, the insider position Du Bois articulates represents economic security, identification with a proud cultural lineage, patriotism, and fulfillment of stereotypically male duties, while the outsider position represents poverty, economic insecurity, not fulfilling stereotypically male duties and a loss of power.

We can shed light on the potential for squelching internal identity contradictions in the *Free Choice Paradigm* experiments first initiated by *Jack Brehm* in 1956. Free Choice Paradigm exposed that given a conflicting choice, people often degrade their other options as inferior after 'choosing' their preferred object. Extrapolated to MTR, this could simply mean that participants in mountaintop removal may be more likely to suppress contradictory internal views about mountaintop removal to maintain a coherent identity as a miner, while repressing anti-mountaintop removal discourse as those discourses belonging to non-miners. Effort justification paradigm research, pioneered in the

late 1950's by *Aronson and Mills*, further dictates that people are more likely to justify morally ambiguous actions which require personal effort. In relation to mountaintop removal, this could be a potent tool for understanding the prevalence of a pro-MTR identity formulation exhibited in dominant image and narrative depictions of Appalachian coal miners, who are men that spring from these communities.

The gendered associations of the pro and antimountaintop removal debate require an inspection of male gender formulation in the Appalachia's to partially explain the ideological divide. Du Bois further identifies what it means to be male and black in his analysis of double consciousness and argues that manhood and womanhood are constantly put into doubt because African maleness and femininity are constructed in relation to a white dominant construction of sex. Does class and secure employment contribute to the construction of male identity in the Appalachia's in a similar way Du Bois implicates race and gender construction? There is a confluence of research on hegemonic masculinity maintenance which suggests that employed and unemployed men embed employment stability and income security as a dominant pillar in masculine performance, both in self-reference and in the status of other men. The formulation of hegemonic masculinity is based on exhibiting outward independence, breadwinner mentality, the role of provider and securer of safety. To many, this is what it means to "be a man."

Rebecca Scott elucidates a critical link in her work on masculinity and mountaintop removal, "When people talked about work, they were talking about men, particularly family men -breadwinners. Typically, a job at Wal-Mart is understood not to be adequate to take care of a family. In southern West Virginia, the kind of work that can support a family has been synonymous with coal mining for much of the twentieth century". Outside of coal mining



there are virtually no high-paying jobs for the rural residents of West Virginia and Kentucky. Due to mining as predominantly male work, the household structure is predicated on access to 'real' employment and therefore, limits the conceptual economic choice options of the mountaintop removal communities. The masculinity of the working-class MTR-mining breadwinner is constructed against the "dependence" of others. A strip-miner who was recently laid off after a mine closure estimated that the laying-off of 400 miners represents a direct loss for 12,000 dependents. <sup>14</sup> The contradiction of independent masculinities is also revealed in the miner's statement. His independent identity is dependent on the availability of "real" jobs generated by the inequalities of the labor market and wage structure.

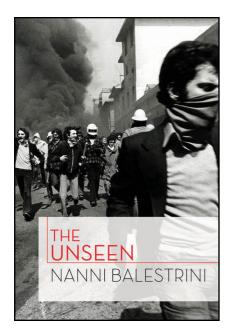
Silvia Frederici argues that capitalism and patriarchy intersect as a social system of production that, "does not recognize the production and reproduction of the worker as a social-economic activity and a source of capital accumulation, but mystifies it instead as a natural resource or a personal service, while profiting from the wageless condition". While we outlined above how women bear the brunt of health and domestic responsibilities, we have not analyzed the roles of women in these communities considering a prevalent, gendered hierarchy of labor activities in mountaintop removal communities. It is not so much the relativity of wage or employment statistics of men and women in mountaintop removal communities, but how their labour responsibilities affect gendered communication, accumulation of power and the assertion of political control. While there is little academic research on female experiences in Appalachian mining communities, audio, video and news documentation show that it is predominantly women who communicate about the negative effects of mountaintop removal and primarily women who publicly articulate concerns about environmental suffering or injustice;

it is primarily an archetype of masculine men who run subsidiary government authorities, run the coal companies, and work in the mines. Thus, it appears that the anti-MTR debate is femininely gendered.

The anti-MTR debate is not just centered on stopping strip-mining in the Central Appalachians, but is an attempt at addressing hierarchical gender relations in production and reproduction. The centrality of mining as a way of life and the dramatic rise in mountaintop removal mining creates the stage for two dominant tensions expressed first in the internal conflicts and cognitive dissonance of the "real" male workers left in Kentucky and West Virginia, and secondly between the miners, their beneficiaries and those negatively affected by mining. As pointed out above, these internal/external conflicts appear commonly in most people as anxiety and reveal an immobilized social position. Hence the struggle should not be against the mountaintop removal miner, but against the concentrating economic power of the mining corporations, while revealing the dangers and faults of the dominant male identity construction in relation to not just mining, but familial relations and the environment.

For anti-mountaintop removal discourse to be successful, it must address the ideological roots of male identity formulation which is mostly focuses on maleness through economic security, breadwinner mentality, being the provider, and access to "real" work, and addressing the monumental task of identifying men with traditionally female gendered labour in the re-animation of masculine identity. These conclusions can be drawn about the vast majority of environmental injustice scenarios, from identity construction around tar sands production to the constant degradation of Indigenous territories for development in Southern Ontario. It is no wonder that women often compose the leadership of environmental injustice struggles.  $\Delta$ 

1 3 (Scott, 2007) 1 4 (Scott, 2007) 1 5 (Fredrici, Caliban and The Witch, 2004:16)



### (Gli Invisibili) The Unseen By Nanni Balestrini (Verso Books) Review by Bryan Hill

N THE POPULAR CONSCIOUSNESS OF RADICALS today, May, 1968 in France is still regarded as one of the most popular moments of social upheaval in the West, highlighted by the antics of the Situationist movement, street battles with police, occupations of universities, and generalized revolt. Less celebrated are the years surrounding 1977.

The stories told by Nanni Balestrini in his 1987 novel The Unseen, document the struggles and street battles, the move towards armed struggle and the severe, wide sweeping repression that are known in anarchist, communist and autonomist circles as the "years of lead", "Italy '77" or "Autonomia". Anarchist Alfredo M. Bonanno's classic text, *Armed Joy*, was written in the context of the revolts chronicled within Balestrini's pages.

The Unseen weaves together multiple narratives, told from the perspective of a working-class youth. Uprisings within the prison he is held in meld together with the high school student rebellion that threatens to tear the school to shreds overlapping street battles and squatted social centres. But the most consistent themes that carry the story forward are of an uncompromising politic of refusal that seeks to negate this entire world, and heavy-handed repression, which Balestrini himself experienced first-hand.

## REVIEWS

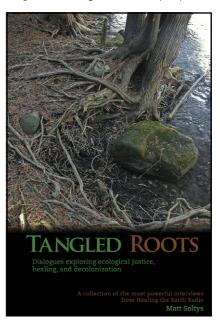
The stories kept my heart racing. One particularly vivid moment describes the events after a death at the hands of the police, when the trains from surrounding suburbs became packed at each station as masked or helmeted revolutionaries boarded the trains with 2x4 flag poles, banners and the stench of gasoline. No demonstration has been called, but everyone is aware that state violence has called for a fight in the city. I wish it was as easy to say this youthful rebellion won, but the real face and weight of repression bears heavy on the reader as the book carries on, with a particularly honest telling of the hardships of those who give it their all but whose movement fades away as repression grows.

Nanni Balestrini comes from the ultra-left Communist tradition in Italy in the 1970s, and was active within the Italian writers' movement known as Neoavanguardia, or the "New Vanguard". It was this movement and its experimental tendencies that led him to write The Unseen in unpunctuated prose. Surprisingly, this was incredibly easy to read. I found that without the punctuation to slow me down, I was able to be caught up in the ideas and situations as they unfolded in the text. Given the speed and quick escalation of the action, I was so caught up in the moments being described that I felt I needed to catch my breath.

The most disappointing part of reading this book was that after some research, I found that Balestrini's works are in dire need of English translation. Less than a handful of his novellas and poetry collections have been translated. His writing has been translated into other languages such as French, including one of his most famous works, "Vogliamo tutto" We Want Everything, which describes the 1969 struggles and conflicts in the FIAT car factories.

I recommend this text to anyone interested in seeing how close a bold refusal of work and subservience could be to our own experience if we only had the strength to grasp it. I also recommend it to all the dreamers who wish to see a popular,

grassroots movement that is not afraid to clash with the police and institutions that keep us returning to work every day.  $\Delta$ 



#### **TANGLED ROOTS**

By Matt Soltys (Healing The Earth Press)

Review by Aiden Globe

HIS BOOK SHOOK AND CHALLENGED ME in the best of ways. Revisiting it to prepare for this review, I was tempted to jump right back in and read the whole thing over. If only I were a faster reader! It's rare that I read the same book twice, but there's so much packed into just under 200 pages.

Drawn from his five years of producing Healing the Earth Radio, author/editor Matt Soltys has brought together a superb collection of interviews exploring our troubled relationship with this fine planet. Probing broadly into the gritty, dark reality of the current, worsening ecological crisis, the dozen selected interviews, along with Soltys' cogent commentary and analysis, bring vital marginalized perspectives to the fore.

In a departure from mainstream environmentalism's unit-analyses of carbon emissions and pundits' debates over ineffectual and misleading State policies,

Tangled Roots reframes environmentalism and deep ecology within a grounded consideration of today's global social context. Highlighting the close relationship between social injustice and ecological issues, it contends that the systematic inequalities and oppressions that shape life today cannot be isolated from concurrent ecological devastation. Rather — opening with interviews on climate justice, oil depletion, and the militarization of climate change — Tangled Roots is quick to point out that those most affected by ecological injustice are often also those most affected by social injustice; and as climate change and resource depletion intensify, the racist, patriarchal, and colonial characteristics of the dominant society will be all the more brutally enforced.

As such, Soltys expresses the hope that this book will "break down barriers between different subcultures and social movements, and encourage stronger alliances and solidarity." In my experience, the middle chapters of Tangled Roots have provided a great deal of food for thought on how to move beyond the divisive, socially constructed identities (i.e. "white", "male", "straight", etc.) that reinforce the barriers Soltys addresses. Focussing on transformative ways of relating to the land, connecting our own emotional health with the living world around us, this section encourages the reader to redefine abundance and wealth, to seek it in deep connections with land, place, and people, rather than in empty materialism. Introducing permaculture as a practical, applied way to simultaneously participate in healing the earth and meeting human needs, it presents a way of moving forward by re-engaging and re-envisioning the land under the concrete.

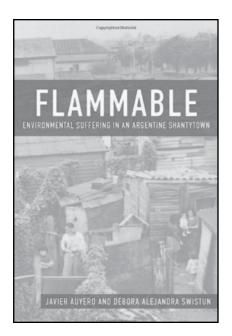
The final chapters of the book present stories of resistance, State repression, and Indigenous resurgence, emphasising the need for direct action in defence of the earth. Highlighting "colonization, empire, agriculture, and civilization" (Soltys, p. 172) as the root causes of impending ecosystemic collapse, the reader is left to



mull over a stark, unflinching assessment of the hard, shitty truth: in the course of a few short years (decades at best), those of us interested in halting ecocide and dismantling a global pyramid scheme founded on "captivity, or death" (Soltys, p. 174) must: decolonize, unlearn racism, patriarchy and more in the process; build strong, diverse alliances with other resistors; sever our dependency on capitalist infrastructure (for food, water, and other necessities); and build a movement capable of so broadly undermining the legitimacy of the State that it cannot survive the catastrophic consequences of climate change.

The future of this civilization is bleak, like its present and its past. Tragically, for the first time ever, the crumbling Tower of Babylon threatens to cast its shadow over all of humanity and all the globe. Tangled Roots is courageously honest about all of this and the challenges that it entails. Nonetheless, I found it profoundly enheartening. It serves the truth raw and, stomaching the sight of blood, gives the reader something to work with: shrewd insights that uproot the white supremacist ideology of "progress," give voice to the trauma of civilized life, and hold space for something new, free, and healthy to grow.  $\Delta$ 

REVIEWS 47



#### **FLAMMABLE**

by Javier Auyero and Deborah Alexandra Swiston Review By Joshua Coby

UMAN CIVILIZATION WILL GO DOWN IN the fossil records as the sixth mass extinction in world history, with upper-limit species extinction rates currently estimated at 14,000 per year. We must admit, there is a certain darkness about us. The way we eat, perhaps? We feed not only ourselves but are now globally involved in the toil of constructing something much bigger than ourselvessomething nameless, yet everywhere. We are measured according to our productivity, according to how much we can consume. The disabled, the overworked, and the peripheral are the redundancies in this great feast.

Let's meditate on two words for a moment. Externalities (the unaccounted waste of production) and redundancies (the useless human waste in production). These words reverberate in the air of the slums, the smell of garbage, the sun reflecting off corrugated, rusted tin-scrap roofs in the Namibian desert and the thousands of kids picking through the Mumbai garbage dumps for something usable, sellable. Externalities and redundancies signify people made of garbage, who eat garbage, who live in garbage, who build wondrous cities out of the waste of others. They are the human trash of our Western capitalist production, and there are over one billion of them.

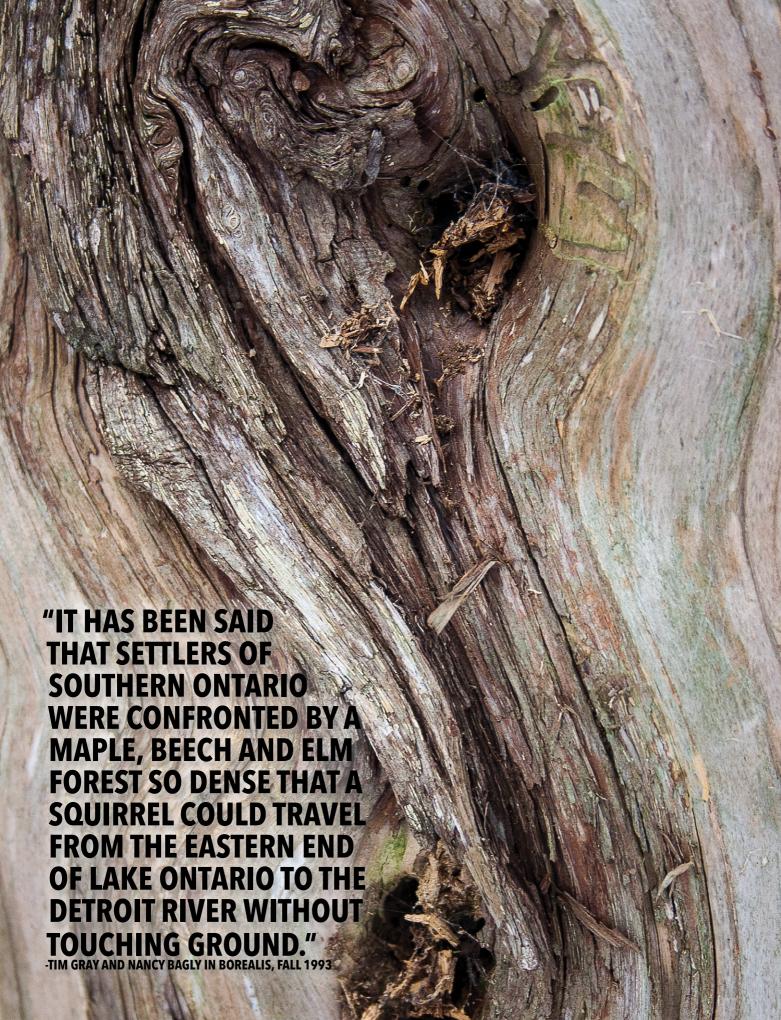
Have you ever wondered why this mass of lumpen-proles hasn't gathered together in an unruly mob and marched on the Versailles and White Houses of this world? Javier Auyero and Deborah Alexandra Swiston posit an answer to that question in their book Flammable: Environmental Suffering in an Argentine Shantytown, a book which explores something much darker than the inhumanities and downright murders committed by corporations and governments against the inhabitants of a Southern Buenos Aires shantytown known as Flammable. What could be darker than murder? A thorough exploration of Flammable-reveals passivity and social inaction in the face of terror and corruption. Flammable is situated beside a hazardous waste incinerator, a dump, and a petrochemical processing compound that contains between 22-50 industrial plants. It sits on top of a suspected toxic fill site, underneath high voltage wires, and beside one of the most polluted waterways in Argentina. The shantytown got its name when a chemical boat exploded in the canal beside it in the 1970s. Flammable's inhabitants are poisoned with benzene, toluene, mercury and lead; they suffer spontaneous miscarriages, chronic birth defects, skin diseases and rashes, respiratory diseases, and epidemic cancer rates.

Auyero and Swiston do not focus their research on the scars and rashes, but instead they try to understand the way, thatinhabitants view their own environmental suffering. What they find is a toxic confusion of uncertainty, doubt, self-blame, denial, shifted responsibility, conflicting theories, and blindness which preempts any attempt at confronting those responsible for poisoning them. The situation repeatedly implies a domination of these residents into an acceptance of their toxic circumstances. One theme of the book is the lack of power the residents feel they have to change their circumstances and the actors who (sometimes willfully) misshape residents' conceptions of reality. Chapter four, "Categories of the Dominated" to chapter seven, "The Social Production of Toxic Uncertainty," reference the ways in which subsidiary authorities (doctors, company personnel, government officials, media, lawyers) create the conditions for complete confusion, abdication of power to authorities, and waiting which implies a habitual submission.

As you read these pages, it is not just empathy you will feel for these poor and seemingly helpless folks. Something much scarier will haunt you, which is the state of your own immobilized position. There were over 10,000 premature airpollution related deaths in Toronto last year. From Ajax to Orangeville, Hamilton to Guelph, Southern Ontario is almost entirely encased in concrete. Our own family members are dying of epidemic cancers, and it is our garbage which has the highest chance of wiping us off the planet. Poor people, largely people of colour, breathe different air, drink different water, eat different food, and inhabit a different physical world than the rich. Regardless of class, we seem to be completely stuck in our current circumstance, one we can be sure is going to be the death of us.

Finally, this book is a meditation on covert democratic violence. Most writing on environmental injustice tells fairy tales about poor people organizing themselves, rising up and, against all odds, defeating wellresourced corporations and governments. Environmentalists fetishize these stories because they give us hope that change is possible. There has been very little ink spilled on the accounts of those who lose their battles for environmental justice, those whose stories far outnumber the feel-good endings, and those whose daily lives are impacted by innumerable subtle forms of coercion and exploitation. While exploring Flammable's immobilized position, Auyero and Swiston illuminate one more thing: we have yet to name the most insidious forms of democratic violence.





# CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE



# READYTO EXPLODE